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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE REVEALED FUTURE OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

VOLUME XVIII.

BEING VOLUME VIII. OF THE NEW SERIES.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

JANUARY, 1881.

THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

WE are not surprised at the questions put to us. We invited them from honest querists years ago. By honest querists of course we meant persons who did not wish to cavil, but to examine and weigh evidence, as those who are really in earnest always do. At the beginning of another year, whilst wishing grace and blessing to our friends, we repeat the invitation, and shall be glad to answer, or say we cannot, as the case may be, under the modest head of "Notices." We understand that these notices are valued, and that the answers we have been enabled to give have been helpful to our readers, or to those of them who needed only a hint to indicate the line of thought required by the subject. Sometimes those answers have been too brief from the necessity of condensation; but then, those who read the RAINBOW will understand the compliment paid to their intelligence by such condensation. The adage, "A word to the wise," has not lost its pith, old as it is.

Sometimes, however, we are asked questions which cannot be answered by the summary process, because they cover a wide field of thought and touch doctrines of vast importance. Here, for example, is one, often put to us, which must have a brief paper instead of a paragraph: "Are not the great cloud of witnesses spoken of in Hebrews xii. 1, the disembodied souls of the saints, named in the previous chapter, looking down upon us from heaven as the witnesses of our conduct in the Christian race?"

Of course our answer would be, "No, decidedly and emphatically, no!" But this, though a true answer, is too short to give satisfaction. It is a bald negative, and affords no helpful reason to the honest inquirer why he should give up the notion that the souls of the Hebrew heroes are looking down from heaven upon the conduct of Christians striving to be faithful in the midst of trials. We shall, therefore, as concisely as is compatible with clearness, state our reasons for the negative answer that we have assumed to be correct.

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1. We have no authority from Scripture for the use of the term "disembodied souls." We should not, however, ask for the *ipsissima verba*, the identical words, if the idea they convey were found in the Bible in any other words; but it is not. The conception of conscious souls, that once animated men, thinking, acting, speaking, watching, is common to paganism, to fiction, to poetry and theology; but holy men of God, speaking as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, never allude to it in word or thought. But surely if the idea is in harmony with truth, if it represents an existing reality, the inspired writers were the men to tell us so. They are our guides in all matters respecting the unseen, and if they have told us nothing about disembodied souls, it is a proof of loyalty on our part to the voice of Scripture to believe that they had nothing to tell. It is true that some writers have lately speculated upon "the silence of Scripture," and have imagined it a rich mine for doctrines of which the Scripture *says* nothing. Of course if you make silence an oracle, forgetting the absurdity in your eagerness to establish a theory, you may teach anything; but where is the authority that makes the theory binding? Make silence a revelation, and the demand upon credulity will be enormous. But this eccentric whim must be taken for what it is worth, and that is—nothing.

The word soul, or souls, occurs in the Bible five hundred times, and in this vast number of instances there are only two that can possibly suggest the idea of intelligent existence apart from the body, and on examination the suggestion is seen to be merely superficial, the passages being highly symbolical, whilst the actual doctrine at the heart of the symbol strengthens the position that we have no authority in Scripture for the use of the term "disembodied souls."

2. The eleventh of Hebrews opens by telling us that "faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," and closes by saying, "These all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." These two sentences make it quite certain that the next sentence (xii. 1) cannot possibly bear the interpretation of human souls in heaven witnessing the conduct of men upon the earth. Besides, resurrection runs through the chapter as the hope of these Hebrew saints, and not the rapture of their souls to heaven with all their faculties of thought and observation complete. No doubt you will find this doctrine in ecclesiastical creeds and catechisms, poisoned by the leaven of an unsuspected paganism, but the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews and his illustrious countrymen whom he places in his picture gallery, knew nothing of it. These brave men witnessed for God; but who witnessed their fidelity to conviction, their loyalty to revealed truth, their consecration to God?

3. The answer is, Their enemies, persecutors, murderers.

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These formed "the cloud of witnesses," who saw with astonishment, and often with fury at what they considered the fanatical madness of their victims, their stedfast adherence to the God of their fathers. They refused to "accept deliverance" from horrible torture, though they knew it must end in death, because "they looked for a better resurrection." Any one acquainted with Grecian or Roman theatres knew what a "cloud of witnesses" meant. The fact that suggested the eleventh chapter is found in the concluding paragraph of the tenth:—

"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not one of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

The word rendered "gazingstock," θεατριζο, means made a spectacle in a theatre, or in places set apart for wrestling, fighting, and so forth for the amusement of spectators. In these places criminals were sometimes exposed and punished. The following affecting passage, from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, brings these exhibitions vividly before us:—

"For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

The word rendered "spectacle" in this passage is θεατρον—theatron—so that the Apostle felt that he and his fellow sufferers for Christ's sake were, like the Hebrew confessors in a previous age, gazed upon by a great cloud of witnesses. Hence the words in the verse under notice (Heb. xii. 1). "We *also*"—equal to: There are many spectators of our conduct now, as there were of theirs formerly. Mr. Conybeare * translates 1 Cor. iv. 9 thus:—"For

* Conybeare and Howson's, "Life and Epistles of St. Paul."

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I think, God has set forth us the apostles last of all, like criminals condemned to die, to be gazed at in a theatre by the whole world, both men and angels." And he gives the following illustrative note: "Literally, *because we have been made a theatrical spectacle.* Compare Heb. x. 33. The spectacle to which St. Paul here alludes was common in those times. Criminals condemned to death were exhibited for the amusement of the populace on the arena of the amphitheatre, and forced to fight with wild beasts, or to slay one another or gladiators. These criminals were exhibited at the end of the spectacle as an exciting termination to the entertainment ('set forth last of all.') So Tertullian paraphrases the passage, '*Nos Deus Apostolos novissimos elegit velut bestiarios.*'"

If it were at all needful we might further strengthen the argument by quoting Phil. iii. 13, 14, and 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, as well as several other passages in Paul's Epistles; but perhaps the reader will see from what has been said that the notion of souls in heaven witnessing the career of saints on earth must be given up as destitute of foundation either in fact or Scripture. But let us remember that the world is watching us, who profess that we are not of it; and let us live accordingly.

REGENERATION AND RESURRECTION.

I. AT the Conference of "The Conditional Immortality Association," held in Maberly Chapel in 1879, I was startled at hearing a tenet asserted to the effect that the true period of Regeneration is at the Resurrection from the dead. I made no remark at the time, for I imagined the assertion to be merely a "private interpretation" of some hitherto obscure Scripture, and confined to Mr. George Brown. To my surprise, however, at the Conference lately held at Liverpool, I found that the above tenet was believed in by several of the brethren there present; I deemed it therefore right to examine its claim for acceptance. Having searched in vain for the Scriptural authority on which it is supposed to rest, I sought from some of the brethren the reason for their belief; and learn (subject to correction) that it is necessary in order to uphold the doctrine of the unconscious state of the believers who die. They suppose, that if a man is "born again" during this age, he cannot die absolutely, but must exist continuously in a spirit form.

II. Now it is evident that the question turns on the nature of the "New Birth," its effect on the believer, and the object for which it is conferred. In the course of our investigation opportunity will be afforded for dispelling the illusion that the present state of a regenerated person concedes any ground for belief that

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he must, after death, necessarily remain in a spiritually conscious condition until the Resurrection.

III. I say "present state," for I cannot but think that the following Scriptures assert beyond question the fact of the Divine bestowal of the new birth during this current age wherein the Gospel of salvation is preached, which began by the ocular proof of the conversion of three thousand souls by the power of the Pentecostal Spirit. This was followed by that of Saul, the Jew of Tarsus, and subsequently by that of the Gentile Centurion and others. What name can be given to the effect then produced on hearers of the Word, who are said to have received the Holy Spirit, to have repented, to have been conscious of the forgiveness of sins, and to have been baptized? Is it not regeneration? If not, what is it?

Is it not written that "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, *is* born of God?" 1 John v. 1, in which verse we also perceive that being "born," and being "begotten" of God mean the same thing;* moreover, that the Divine endowment has a *present purpose*, viz., for overcoming the world (ver. 4).

Those who believe, who were dead in trespasses and sins, God *hath quickened* into the consciousness of a "newness of life," (Eph. ii. 5); they *are* "freed from sin," to which they have judicially died with Christ; nor, though still in sinful flesh, can they sin unto condemnation, because they *are born of God* (Rom. vi. 7, 11; viii. 1; with 1 John v. 18). Here again a *present* purpose is declared for this condition; it is in order to the service of God (Rom. vi. 18, 22), and for a testimony to His grace and love. The Apostle Peter says that brotherly love should be engendered by the acknowledgment of the fact of all "*being born again*" by the same incorruptible seed, the Word of God (1 Pet. i. 22, 23).

The Evangelist John says that "as many as 'received' Jesus as the Son of God, to them *gave He the right* to become the sons of God; who *were born*, not of the flesh, or the will of man, *but of God*" (John i. 12, 13).

The Apostle James asserts that God "of His own will begat us with the Word of Truth;" testimony being again the object during

* I make this assertion on other ground also, viz., that the Greek word γενναω is used to signify both being "born," and being "begotten." Moreover, to show that the former word should govern the meaning of the latter, the word γενναω is used in Matt. ii. 1, 4, Luke i. 35, John iii, 3, 4, 5, 6, ix. 2, 32, and other passages, in no one of which instances would "begotten" have been applicable. The word is also used in 1 Cor. iv. 15, and 1 Peter i. 3, 23, and in all the passages that follow the one to which this note refers, except James i. 18, where the word "begat" is obtained from αποκνεω, the proper meaning of which is "to bring forth" (Parkhurst). Closely allied to being "born."

The word πεωτότοκος is used to denote both "first born" and "first begotten." Thus in Parkhurst's Lex. is found πεωτοτόκος πάσης κτίσεως "firstborn *or* first begotten of the whole creation." Also πεωτοτόκος ἐκ τῶν νεκεῶν "the firstborn *or* first begotten from the dead."

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this present age, to the dawn of a new creation by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, of which those thus begotten are the "firstfruits" (James i. 18, with Eph. i. 11, 14).

The Lord Jesus, on the evening of His resurrection, when He became "The Last Adam," Head of a new Creation, breathed on His disciples the quickening power of that life that constituted them subjects of that new creation; for the exercise of which He also bestowed on them the Holy Spirit as the fountain-head within them whence their testimony should flow forth (John xx. 21–23; 2 Cor. v. 17, 18). What was this but "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" conveying to their souls the consciousness of judicial freedom from "the principle of sin and death" expressed in that word "Peace" that accompanied the action? (Rom. viii. 2.) I ask again whether this be not Regeneration?

Much more might be adduced to the same effect, viz., to demonstrate that regeneration and conversion are Divine acts of this present age in order to a "newness of life." "*Now* are we the sons of God" (1 John iii. 2).

IV. Before passing to the next topic it may be well to state that the only instance recorded in Scripture of regeneration being coincident with resurrection, is that of the nation of Israel *in the age to come*, when the repentant members of that nation who are living at the period of the Second Advent of the Messiah, will be regenerated, and those true Israelites who have died in faith will be raised from the dead. The two events are recorded in full detail in Ezek. xxxvi. 23-38, and xxxvii.

This period of "the regeneration" of Israel is the event to which the Lord Jesus referred, as stated in Matt. xix. 28.

V. I now proceed to show that the present participation in the "new birth" or "spirit of life in Christ Jesus," does not involve a conscious continuance of existence after death in any form whatever. Apart from the unquestionable fact that the faculties of mind, will, or affections have no spiritual subsistence dissociated from the material organs of which they are the obvious phenomena, so that when these organs perish all mental or intelligent action is at an end: apart too, at present, from the abundant evidence from Scripture that confirms the above, I will produce the experience of Paul the apostle, both as to the fact and effect of his regeneration and conversion, and to his expectations at death; written by himself under inspiration of God.

Regarding the former event he says, that having been "before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, serving divers lusts and pleasures" . . . . "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, not by works of righteousness that he had done, but according to His mercy He saved him, *by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit*" (1 Tim. i. 13; Titus iii. 3-5).

This plain statement, taken together with the well-known scene

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related in Acts ix., needs no comment to persuade men as to the fact of the apostle's regeneration. The effect having been the conversion of a persecutor and blasphemer into "a chosen servant, to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles" in this dispensation.

Nor is this to be reckoned a peculiar case, for he says that "Jesus Christ first showed forth all long-suffering in him, *for a pattern* to them who should hereafter believe."

VI. Let us now learn from this same apostle's own writing, what his expectations were when the earthly house of this tabernacle* should be dissolved. These are given in 2 Cor. v. 1-10, which passage is to be connected with the preceding chapter, wherein, after adverting to his own and Timothy's perplexities and persecutions, he says to the Corinthians that they are not in despair, "though always delivered unto death, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and *shall present us with you!* (i.e., Corinthian saints) (iv. 14). He then proceeds to strengthen their faith with the assurance that "If this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" i.e., as in 1 Cor. xv. 38, 53, God will give them a body that pleaseth Him, a spiritual, immortal body that they may "bear the image of the heavenly" (ver. 48). Well he knew that the glorious body that is to clothe the spirits of the saved is the form and pattern of that of the glorified Firstborn, in which they will surely "not be found naked" in the Father's eyes.

We have just learnt how Paul knew that *as an objective personal individual* he would not be presented to the Father by Jesus at his dissolution, but together with the members of the entire body—"presented with you"—as he writes to the Corinthians (iv. 14). Here then is an assurance that regenerated believers do not, as they severally die, pass into the presence of the Lord in any disembodied form during any intermediate period, but remain in their graves till summoned by the voice of the Archangel, when the entire body—the living members being changed simultaneously into the resurrection state—rise together "to meet the Lord *in the firmament*," not in heaven! (1 Thess. iv. 15-17). If there was such an event as either the passing of believers into glory, or remaining in a conscious state between death and resurrection, here surely was the opportunity for making the revelation. But the apostle is silent on the subject; he knows it not. His mind was occupied solely with the surety of transition from the mortal to the immortal body; his faith, as "*a substance* of things hoped for," could bring the latter into immediate contact with the former.

The Bible knows nothing of a natural immortality, nor does it of the traditional idea of the continued existence of soul as a pure

* That the word "tabernacle" means the human body, see its use in 2 Peter i. 14.

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spirit without the body. Moreover, if the Platonic idea popularly entertained be really credited, the pathos and force are altogether lost in such passages (and there are others of similar import) as the following:—

Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19, "The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee . . . the living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day." Again, Job xiv. 7, "There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch will not cease." Ver. 10, "But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost (spirit), and *where is he?*" Ver. 12, "So man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Psalm xxxix. 13, "O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence, *and be no more.*" We can therefore understand Paul's expectation that "*mortality might be swallowed up* of life;" no interval of consciousness being present to his mind between the moment of death and that of resurrection, when "*mortality*" should "put on immortality," ver. 4.*

For this elevated destiny God had already prepared Paul by his regeneration, and given him therewith "*the earnest*" of the resurrection body by the bestowal of "the Holy Spirit." God Himself had thus "wrought him for that self-same thing." (Ver. 5, which should be read in the light of chap. iv. 17, and John xx. 22.)

Under these circumstances the apostle was "confident" that he would, "and willing rather to be absent from the (mortal) body, and to be present with the Lord" in his "house from heaven." It is to be noted that being "present with the Lord" implies a personal actual presence, never promised till His Second Advent. Moreover, to be absent from the body and present with the Lord literally and immediately, would prove too much, as He is now seated at the right hand of God on His Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21); therefore to be personally present with the Lord Jesus in an immediate sense, would involve a premature participation in the glorious Majesty of the Godhead, and contradict 1 Thess. iii. 13. The body complete is first of all to "appear before the judgment seat of Christ" at the resurrection.

But in addition to the above, there is not the shadow of authority for the supposition that some members of the Body of Christ should be blessed in heaven before the whole, even in spirit form. This were to render the ways of God unequal and partial, and to destroy the unity taught in 1 Cor. xii. 12-20. *Already is the entire body "blessed with all spiritual blessings in Heaven in Christ;"* and this truth is now presented to the faith of the

* Consciousness is an attribute of the spirit of life . . . this marvellous agency is manifested in living organisms, and does not operate beyond, or independent of organic faculties." (Forster, Biblical Psychology.)

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regenerated soul, "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" as *an earnest* of the riches of the grace of God that await the spiritual bodies in resurrection (Eph. i. 3, 13, 14). Can more be expected previous to that event? (See verse 7.)

Our apostle, of whose hope I have written above, had no expectation of any glory or reward *till* he should receive his crown "at that day," when, *together with all them that love the appearing* of "the righteous Judge," they should receive theirs (2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Pet. i. 3-7).

VII. A passage in Phil. i. 21-24 has occasioned some difficulty with commentators, and as it *seems* to favour a priority of blessing for the apostle, I allude to it, aided by a high authority* in Scriptural Psychological matters. Paul says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." The noble apostle hesitates between these two, life and death: for the sake of his Master, he would live; for his own sake, he would prefer death. He decides, however, in the purity of an unselfish spirit, for life. "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

Mr. Forster here affords an explanation that renders the desire of Paul consistent with the hope expressed in the passage already commented on, 2 Cor. v. He says, "The 23rd verse of this first chapter of the Epistle to Philippians depends for its explanation upon whether the Greek words εἰς το ἀναλῦσαι should be translated with reference to the apostle returning to dust, or to the returning of Christ. The present translation is not accurate; the Platonic theory has evidently guided it. The word ἀναλῦσαι, from ἀνά and λύω, means, "to loose back again," that is, to return as a ship to port, or, as used by the Lord to express *His return* from the wedding (Luke xii. 36); hence the word ἀναλυσαι should have its proper meaning of "returning." But what returning?" The original words are τό ἀναλῦσαι "the returning;" to which the apostle fixes the result, viz., "and to be with Christ." This dissipates all doubt, and, as before remarked, renders Paul's desire *consistent with the hope expressed in* all his epistles.

I cannot avoid a remark before closing this paper, that the intermediate disembodied state is one of woe or bliss, and therefore affects the unbeliever as well as the believer, and consequently anticipates both the day of judgment and the resurrection, a circumstance that cannot have the sanction of Him whose attributes are equity and justice.

Instead, therefore, of regeneration in this age being an obstacle to faith in the unconscious state of the dead, it is on the contrary a gracious preparatory work of God, which, whilst it conveys assu-

* Forster, "Biblical Psychology."

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rance of a total oblivion of intermediate time, becomes a Divine solace for "present afflictions," causing them to appear "light and momentary" in view of the imminent approach of the resurrection."

For "though our outward man perish, the inward man"—the new man, growth of the new birth—"is renewed day by day" in this very expectation that "worketh for us a far more exceeding and *eternal* weight of glory!" Therefore "we faint not!"

Reading. H. GOODWYN.

KING AND FATHER.

1. OUR great Creator, Thou eternal King,
Of love and life the one eternal spring,
We offer homage at Thy gracious throne,
Accept the offer and Thy subjects own.

2. In peerless glory is Thy high abode,
The upper palace of the living God.
Thy splendid robe is the eternal light,
Thy sceptre truth, Thine empire infinite.

3. The universe is Thine, O Sovereign dread,
All space, all time, the living and the dead.
We cannot grasp these wonders, mighty Lord,
But Thou hast met our weakness in Thy Word.

4. Undying song for this surpassing grace,
Which shines from God in the Redeemer's face.
Enabling us, poor feeble ones, to sing—
"This is *Our Father*—this eternal King!"

THETA.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

EVEN the secular newspaper is ever and anon throwing light on the Book and its story. And it is worth the labour of the Christian student to take up the scraps of intelligence from Bible lands which come to hand from time to time. Here is one from the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"About five weeks ago a fire broke out in the little town of Urfa, better known to the European public by its Biblical name of Ur, and highly venerated throughout the Orient as the birthplace of Abraham. The house in which that celebrated patriarch was born is still standing in Urfa; it is called 'Bet Chalil Allah,' the house of God's friend—and hundreds of pious pilgrims visit it annually.

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"When the conflagration took place on the 24th of January, many of the inhabitants of Urfa took refuge in Abraham's dwelling, and carried thither all their valuables, persuaded that the flames would respect the structure in which so holy a personage first saw the light of day. Strange to say, their faith in the inviolability of this ancient sanctuary was justified by events; for while the fire raged all night long in Urfa, destroying a large number of houses in the vicinity of 'Bet Chalil Allah,' that edifice, as well as one or two buildings immediately adjacent to it, remained absolutely unharmed. This triumphant vindication of its protecting virtue has, so it would appear, greatly enhanced its reputation for sanctity; and doubtless the pecuniary results of the present year's pilgrimages will enable the Urites to surmount their losses by fire in a highly satisfactory manner."

Among the different names which the birthplace of the father of the faithful has borne three deserve notice: Ur, Edessa, and Urpha.

When Terah, the father of Abram, left it to go towards Canaan it bore the first name. It was "Ur of the Chaldees." When Christ and His apostles were engaged in active ministry it was called Edessa, and was the royal residence of a race of kings called the Algari, a name which was common to them, like Pharaoh to the Kings of Egypt. The name bears on its front the meaning—Father of strangers or sojourners. Was it given them because of their paternal treatment of a people dwelling among their subjects, whose real home was far away in a distant land? It would seem so. Now ever since the carrying captive of the ten tribes of Israel, and then the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, a great many of the Hebrews clung to Mesopotamia, and in that land, what place was so likely to draw them to itself as Ur, where their venerated father Abram was born? Surely no spot, out of the holy land, could have such tender associations clinging round it as Edessa.

Nor could the men to whom the command was given, "Go ye to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," overlook that part of the flock which dwelt in and about Ur, *alias* Edessa. Besides those ancient names there is the modern one, for the town is now called "Urpha." This is a restoration with an added syllable, *pha*. Grecian dominion over those lands had given rise to the new name, Edessa; but the time came when the mixed race, whom we know as Saracens, cast out the Greek of the sons of Japhet with great ease, and restored the ancient language to its due place. Then it was the "Ur" reappeared in its modern form "Urpha."

There are three classes of people who claim filial relation to Abram. Tracing their genealogy to Ishmael, the eldest son of Abram, the Arab upholders of Mohamedanism claim Abram as "the father of the faithful." Then the literal seed of Jacob are most emphatic in the assertion, "We have Abraham to our father." Besides these, the intelligent Christian has the authority of Paul

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for saying, "Since we are Christ's we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise" (Gal. iii. 29.)

Is it then a thing to reject with contempt, when we are told that the house in which the great natural and spiritual patriarch of Arabs, Hebrews, and Christians, was born is held in such esteem that pilgrimages are made to it every year? The relationship of that great man is not even exhausted when we have named the three people above enumerated. Besides Ishmael and Isaac, he was the father of Zimram and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. These settled in the east of Canaan, and we know that Midian became a very considerable people.

In an age like ours, when the solidarity of peoples is so much talked of, and special stress is laid upon breed and birth, as tending to seek unity, it ought not to surprise a thinker to learn that in a land where so much of Abram's blood is circulating his name is held in honour. Since human nature is what it is, can we despise a pedigree which these Eastern people trace back nearly four thousand years? But this very pedigree takes its rise in Ur of the Chaldees, near the head waters of the Euphrates, and not far from the place where the Romans and Crassus their general met with a disastrous defeat from the Parthian army. We shall perhaps be reminded that a very wide gap existed in the flow of this sympathy for Abram's birthplace, during the time from his leaving it, to the time when his posterity were carried captive into that region.

We are prepared to admit the fact, but this raises the question, "How came the connection to be restored"?

In answer to this question we ask the reader to admit, just as a "working theory," that when the Hebrews found themselves captives in Mesopotamia they remembered that it was the land of Abram's nativity; that they found out the very place where he was born; and that when the Persians overthrew the Chaldean power the Hebrews became free to change their place of abode in the land, or to leave it altogether. We know that many of them chose to remain there. Then is it not reasonable that many of them would gather to the spot where their father was born and cluster round its site, or if the house was yet standing, for the art of building lasting edifices was early known in that land, would see to its repair? Is there any after light to support this view? We maintain that there is. A Bible containing all the Scriptures accepted by Protestants as of Divine authority, with small exceptions, is now in our hands in the Hebrew tongue, as Luke, John, and chief Rabbi Adler all call its language, which the Syrian Christians have always stated to be the product of the joint exertions of Jude the apostle, whom they call by his surname Thady, and Abgarus, King of Edessa, his contemporary.

This Bible is called the Peshito, or the open, plain record of the Word of God. Nothing has ever induced these Syrian Christians to vary in their tradition of the origin of their Bible, or caused them

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to swerve from their attachment to it. For even now, where their congregations do not all understand its language, they have it read aloud and then interpreted to them.

The New Testament was finished last for this edition, and yet this part was completed before Peter wrote his second letter, before John's latter two epistles were written, and even before Jude, its editor, wrote his short original letter.

No scholar who contends strongly for its having been translated from Greek, can produce the original from which it is said to have been made. Nor can he tell what became of it. Further, he can find no ancient author who says he had seen the Greek original which supplied the text of the Peshito. And, once again, we hold that none of the Greek critics can lay his hand upon one of the six hundred and seventy MSS. which have been collated to supply a Greek text for our revisers and say, "Here is a manuscript codex used in translating the Peshito." Well may it be so, when there never existed such a codex. It must be so, if not the preaching of the Gospel only, but its collected writings were given to "the Jew first" as they must have been. It was Jesus who spake the words, "Behold I send you prophets, wise men and *writers*, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

To whom were these words spoken? Not to Gentiles; they never were admitted between the temple and the altar. It is to the multitude at Jerusalem who had come to the Passover from every land of their dispersion, that Jesus Christ is speaking. Writers were to appear in time to test their character as well as preachers before their overthrow; but the war which ended in that overthrow began A.D. 66. By this time they ought to have had the writings before them. And so they had in the Peshito. But an edition suiting this prediction must have appeared too early for the Revelation, written A.D. 96. Nay, it would need to be out before 2nd Peter was written, which indicates that he had obtained a copy of "all Paul's letters and the other Scriptures." Does he not urge believers to be mindful both of the prophets' words and those of the apostles? But as the former must be sought in their writings, does it not become a natural conclusion that the words of the latter must be so too?

This is most reasonable when compared with 2 Peter i. 12, 15, where he is intent on securing copies of both his letters to be perused when he is dead. Why then is the first epistle in the Peshito and not the second epistle? Simply because there was urgent reason to issue the Testament before he was moved to write the second letter. And that urgent reason, it seems to us, rose out of the great cause Sanhedrim *versus* Paul the Apostle of the

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Gentiles, which lasted five or six years, and moved the whole Roman Empire.

Then must the story of Christ's life, death and resurrection be sent forth for perusal where preachers could not go. And especially must the Hebrews have the means of testing his claims by comparing the New Testament with the Old. Then such efforts had been made to damage Paul, even with Hebrew Christians, that the story of his labours and samples of his teaching accompanied by the writings of Peter, James and John were needed by the Hebrew believers to enable them to know his worth and appreciate his work. All this the Peshito would serve to accomplish among them, and then remain of permanent service. Now, this being so, we come upon the time of Jude's alleged activity in securing the edition in Syriac, so we may account for additional notes at the end of John, for these editors are inspired men; also for the "Acts" being sent out with such a tantalizing conclusion. It could not wait to tell how Paul would fare at Rome when before the High Court.

A later document briefly notices his first appearance before the Cæsar; but Luke's history was earlier in the work and could not wait for the trial. Even the last two verses of Acts, like the two last of John, may be from the Editor's pen, for they reach two years later than the verse before them.

Now, so noble a Bible would suit Hebrews at Edessa and enable them to become confirmed in the faith of Christ and to learn what that faith involved as taught by Paul. Is there evidence that the written word bore marked fruit? Scholars who hold the view that the Peshito was only a translation made by uninspired men, nevertheless state "that the Syrian churches flourished most in the latter part of the first century, and in the earlier part of the second, and the Christians at Edessa had a temple for divine worship erected after the model of that at Jerusalem." (T. H. Horne, Vol. II., Part 1. Ch. 3, § 3.)

At this point may we not see the budding forth of Hebrew interest in the native home of Abram?

Who but Hebrew converts would choose to build a temple like "the holy and beautiful house" now in ruins? Gentile converts might not have cared for such a model, but Hebrew ones would, and their influence is here seen. Then how comes this temple to be built on the ground once occupied by Abram's family? We read not of any other reproduction of the ruined temple in any other city or country except of that of Onias in Egypt long before, which never was cordially accepted by the Jews at large, nor by any of them until he had brought from the *Word* seeming support for its erection and use. Why, then, a Christian temple like the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, at Ur of the Chaldees, and not elsewhere? Now admit that this place had become a favourite settlement of the exiled Hebrews, when the Gospel reached Edessa,

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and that by the help of Jude's Bible, the Peshito, they had embraced Christianity, and that Abram became dear to all converts as taught by Paul, who found that they were all his children by faith, and then you only need security, and time, and money, and a good measure of enlightenment on their part, and the work can be done. Then even the Saracen or the Turk will spare the early home of Abram, and thus regard for it will be diffused all around. And when the Christian temple was destroyed by Ishmael's children even then the Bet Chalil Allah, or "house of the friend of God," would be protected from destruction.

JAMES HOLDING.

NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

THE Revelation given to St. John by Jesus Christ is contained in a book so extraordinary and so unique that one may well be excused for taking the usual course with it, and that which seems to so many the best course, viz., to leave it alone altogether. Yet to the student of the Bible this is impossible. Independently of the remarkable statement in chapter i. verse 3: "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things that are written therein," the book is one which has a marvellous interest, not to say fascination of its own. All Christians therefore are compelled, however unwillingly, to make themselves more or less acquainted with its contents, and to study it more or less attentively. It is, therefore, impossible for any of us not to take a deep interest in it and to endeavour to understand it.

Notwithstanding the innumerable works on the interpretation of the Apocalypse, and the attempts of so many in past ages to find out the meaning of its mysterious symbolism, we are continually impelled to fresh examination, to fresh search and to fresh study. That study, even if it do not lead to correct interpretation, is never useless, for it is found by experience that this is a Book which, to be understood at all, requires constant reference to the prophets and other writings of the Old Testament, as well as to many parts of the New. The images, at all events, are almost all taken from the Old Testament, and we are thus compelled to *search*; and as we all know by experience in this, as in so many other things, much blessing is in the search itself, even if it do not lead to discovery. We are expressly told that if we wish to find wisdom we must search for it as silver and dig for it as for hidden treasures—and in this pursuit we must be zealous and laborious.

Now, inasmuch as truth will endure any amount of investigation, and indeed fearlessly courts the most searching inquiry, whatever conclusions one comes to, they will, if true, and so far as they are true, abide and remain; while, if false, they are certain, sooner or

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later, to disappear. If, therefore, among all the interpretations that I venture on in regard to this book, only some few sparks of real truth are elicited, my reward will be great.

In all, therefore, which follows, I do not presume for one instant to dogmatise, or to suppose that my interpretation is anything more than an *attempt* to solve this great and difficult problem. It is only, in fact, what *appears* to me at the present time to be the most likely explanation; my object is to provoke inquiry and to promote discussion, as well as to try to *interpret*.

I, of course, assume the inspiration and the genuineness of the Book taken as *a whole*. There are, no doubt, a considerable number of various readings, but taken altogether they do not seem to amount to much, and moreover, in a revelation such as this, there is but little scope for individuality in the writer. He no doubt describes accurately what he saw; and in such a wonderful vision as this, there is little probability of the human element making itself perceptible. The whole of the scenery and of the imagery is sublime, so totally unlike anything else, that it speaks for itself and shines by its own light, and thus "the Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit that it is from God."

The grand object of this Book is undoubtedly to keep us in mind of the "one divine event to which all creation moves:"—The coming of the Lord. This grand hope is the key to the interpretation of the whole Book, and everything in it has a more or less direct reference to it.

There can be no doubt that the coming of the Lord was to all the early Christians the great object of hope and desire. In all their sufferings and their poverty this was the great Beacon Light, which not only consoled them, but showed them the right path to walk in. It irradiated all the events of their lives and was constantly in their thoughts. Unfortunately for Christendom this hope has been, comparatively speaking at all events, very little dwelt upon, and the result has been that instead of a life to be realised *after* the Lord's return, mankind have looked to a certain extent to this life also as the scene of the Lord's triumph. Wherever the coming of Christ is not the paramount object of hope to Christians it must inevitably follow that their thoughts are more or less worldly. Whether that worldliness takes the form of supposing that Christ's kingdom may be promoted by extending its influence in the kingdoms of this world, or by the supposition that the world is anything more than a place of education for another—the result at last must be the same—viz., forgetfulness of the fact that Christians are but strangers and pilgrims upon earth.

In all the Apostolic writings it is easy to gather what were the views of the leaders of the Christian Church in those early days. They evidently looked upon the then existing world as passing away—their hopes and their desires were not in it; but their citizenship in the truest sense was in the New Jerusalem, which

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shall ultimately come down from God out of heaven. Taking then the Lord's coming as the key-note to the interpretation of the Apocalypse, we may safely, I think, draw some deductions from the book as to its *general* scope and character, and I think we may state that: Great as are the diversities of opinion, and many as are the interpretations of this book, there are one or two points on which very little difference of opinion can be said to exist. Two points more especially seem to come out clearly and distinctly, viz., first and chiefly, that *all was not going on right with the Church of God;* and, secondly, that so many and diverse events are alluded to as apparently to foreshadow that some considerable time, possibly a very long time, might elapse before the Restitution of all things. These two points are of the greatest possible importance and can scarcely be gainsaid by the extremest opponents of the ordinary views.

With regard to the first of these points, the book seems even at first sight to foreshadow apostasy within and persecution without the professing Church—and that before the time of the end she would have both to do and to suffer many things.

A third point, also, I think, comes out with even greater clearness and will, I am sure, be denied by none. It is that throughout all these events, whether apostasy or persecution were prefigured, there would be always a select faithful band of the followers of Christ. Lastly, there can be no doubt that the book shows that the *ultimate* end of all these varying scenes and events would be the complete and triumphant establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom. Whether that kingdom was to be set up on the earth in its present state, or after the resurrection, is a point on which there may be diverse opinions, but of the establishment of the kingdom itself there can be no doubt.

These are certainly the chief points on which at all events the great majority of Christians are agreed; as to any others, when we come to examine them, we find at once the greatest possible differences of opinion on almost every single point. Some, for instance, believe that the whole prophecy is already fulfilled; some, that the events referred to in the book are still going on; others, that *all* is still in the future. These have been called, for distinctness' sake, the preterist, the continuous-historical, and the futurist view. I may say at once that I have been led to take the second of these—viz., the continuous-historical view, and for the following reasons: First, because the vision is said to refer to "things which must shortly come to pass." Secondly, that there are many indications that prove that different portions refer to different periods of time, and that therefore there was a continuous history, as it were; such, for instance, as the expression in chapter ix. 6: "And in those days shall men seek death," &c. Thirdly, that it would have been of very little use to the Church had it not, more or less, alluded to the *whole* period between the giving of the prophecy and the coming of

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the Lord, and it was given to be a comfort and consolation during the Lord's absence. For these and other reasons I adopt the continuous-historical view as being the only one that is satisfactory.

There seems to be in several points a remarkable similarity between the Apocalypse and the Book of Daniel. Both Daniel and John were exiles at the time they saw their visions; both were men "greatly beloved;" both use similar imagery, and both refer to the time when the judgment was set and the books opened. Both seem to allude to the same thing when one speaks of the little horn having eyes like the eyes of a man, and the other says, "He that hath wisdom, let him count the number of the beast, for it is a number of a man." Both also certainly contain most distinctly similar prophecies about a beast with ten horns, and both of them tell us that this beast "was destroyed and given to the burning flame." It is interesting, too, to notice that in both cases an explanation of the meaning of the prophecies is given in one or two important, and so to speak, crucial points. Finally and chiefly, both visions lead up to the "coming of the Son of Man." With regard to the general principles on which the interpretation of the book should proceed, I think that although the events typified therein may have a literal, and so to speak, a human fulfilment, yet their *real* import is a spiritual one. The events refer, as I venture to think, not to individuals, such as Cæsar, Constantine, or Napoleon, but to systems and principles. The woman seated on the beast, for instance, is not a woman, but a church—just as the beast is not a real living creature, but a *figure*. No one, again, supposes for a moment that a real beast was to arise out of the sea, or that the servants of God were *literally* to have the seal of God on their foreheads, but only that these figures are taken as being the symbols of what they apply to. Of course, *indirectly*, human kingdoms and purely human affairs may be referred to sometimes, but it is only indirectly, and these form, so to speak, only a sort of by-play. The real thing prophesied is the great working out of the principles of good and evil as exemplified in the professing churches of God.

It is also to be noted that as a rule the prophecy seems to have relation mainly, if not entirely, to the portion of the world which was then under the rule of the Roman Empire, and not to outside nations. The *earth* then is, I think, throughout the prophecy a type or figure of the professing Church of Christ as existing in these countries. The sea is a type of the nations or peoples, who are more or less purely *Pagan*. Compare Isaiah xvii. 13, "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters," and the statement in Rev. xvii. 15. Similarly *cities* represent professing churches. The stars represent the servants of God who give light to the earth; mountains and hills represent the wealthy and externally powerful individuals in the churches, and so on. The sun, I think, represents Divine truth, and the moon the true Church of

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Christ, the Church of the firstborn, receiving its light direct from the Sun. And so with all the other symbols of this extraordinary book.

Proceeding now to consider the vision in detail, we find that it was given by God the Father unto our Lord, in order that His servants might learn by it "things that should shortly come to pass," in accordance with God's promise to Isaiah, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets." We find, then, it is all to lead up to the time when "He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Here it is to be observed (comp. Zech. xii. 10, where precisely the same language is used, and to which no doubt reference is here made) that this wailing is not from terror, but from grief and sorrow; for it is distinctly stated that this wailing and sorrow arise from the Lord pouring out upon the House of David the spirit of grace and supplication. It is in fact a *repentance*, not *remorse*, and it is repentance most deep, earnest, and sincere. It is compared by the prophet to mourning as for an only son, and the *intensity* of it is shown by the fact that even each individual family can derive no comfort from its own members; but all is deep, individual, almost *impassioned* grief. It is a repentance so thorough that now even the very name and thought of an idol is an abomination. Now, indeed, "the (false) prophet and the unclean spirits" pass for ever out of the land. The unclean spirit was, indeed, so far expelled by the first captivity, that *external* obedience was greatly increased, but now "the seven other spirits, more wicked than the first," viz., the internal rebellion of the heart, is cast out, and for ever. Now the false prophet is "wounded in the house of his friends," for in that day "the Canaanite shall be no more in the House of the Lord of Hosts."

Having thus received this comforting assurance, the apostle is shown more of the wonderful means by which all these things were to be brought about.

The Seven Churches and their spiritual condition before God constitute, I think, *the things which are*, about which the apostle was commanded to write, and while the account afforded doubtless great instruction and comfort to the saints of those days, I cannot but think that they are intended also to be a type of seven different periods of the Church's history. It has been very truly remarked that if we take all the varying nations, kingdoms, tribes, and tongues of the earth as existing at any given time, we shall more or less have types or representatives of every degree of civilisation, from the highest to the lowest, and from the lowest state of civilisation to the most degraded savagery and cannibalism. Europe, Asia, and Africa, for instance, represent three widely different states of society and civilisation, and afford instances of every variety of character. In accordance with this principle, we

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may then, I think, take the seven Churches of Asia as types of all the various stages through which a church must pass on its way through earth. We have, in fact, in these Churches what may be called representative characters of all the different states of life in which they exist, or have existed. We have the highest degree of faith and love (in Smyrna) to that of almost absolute abandonment of the same, with the intermediate degrees of half-heartedness and failing zeal. Thus the warnings as well as the consolations requisite to the spiritual condition of each one of us, as well as of every form and condition of Churches, find here what is applicable to their particular cases.

If this be so, then it follows that this wonderful book was given in the form best adapted for the guidance of professing Christians in all ages. It was, in fact, designed by our Lord to be a comfort and a help to His suffering people during the period of His absence, and who can doubt that it has been so? Who can doubt that that blessed Spirit who alone is Christ's representative on earth, has spoken by and through it to the hearts of myriads, and that it has been to many and many a weary and anxious soul, "a lantern to the feet, and a light to the path."

With regard to the Seven Churches, I agree in the main with Mr. Maude's article on this subject.* We have, I think, here traced out before us, an epitome of the future of the Church of Christ. We see at Ephesus very much that is good, purity in life, and love of truth and righteousness; but beginning soon to be accompanied with loss of the original zeal and love. The church, too, like, alas, all human things, starts well and nobly, but after a time her first love begins to slacken. It may even be thought from the words (εξελιπες, *altogether* left thy first love, not simply *left* as in our translation) that the love of the many was waxing cold. Then comes a period of persecution, which cleanses and purifies, and, as in Smyrna, great heroism and love. This is followed by (as in Pergamos) much zeal and devotion, but also by considerable corruption of truth and development of heathen religion. Then (as in Thyatira), though much love and patience and martyrdom are still exhibited, it would seem now that these qualities are confined to the few, and that heathen rites and worship of a very degraded and cruel character (typified by Jezebel, who was a worshipper of Baal) began to abound. Then follows a state of spiritual deadness and corruption, so much so that it is difficult to find even a few names who have kept their garments unstained. This period (the Sardis state) I consider to represent the long dark night of the middle ages, when heathenism was very largely developed in the Church, and Baal all but literally worshipped, as for instance, when they literally "made their sons and daughters to pass through the fire to Baal," *in autos da fi*. We then come to

* "Our Hope," Vol. II., page 288.

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the Philadelphia stage—that of the Reformation, when "a little strength" was manifested by the Church, and a considerable amount of real love and genuine righteousness was displayed.

Last of all comes the Laodicean state—that state which seems to me, as to so many others, indicative of our own times, viz., *lukewarmness*. With many noble exceptions in every division of the professing Church, we may say that, *as a whole*, it is at present neither cold nor hot. Mr. Greg, in his "Enigmas of Life," says, "Our social atmosphere is thick and hazy with insincerities and unrealities. We are not exactly bad, but neither are we strong or good," which is saying, in so many words, we are neither hot nor cold. I think it will generally be admitted that there is much in the condition of professing Christian nations, to justify Mr. Greg's remark, and if so, it makes it extremely probable that we are at present living, so to speak, in the Laodicean age.

We are undoubtedly living in an age when events advance with extreme rapidity, when science has all but abolished the distinctions of time and space. This is clear, and I cannot help regarding it as a sign that the present state of things is one of preparation for another. The immense and extraordinary development of railways and telegraphs has often struck me as a proof that *changes* of some great and considerable character are at hand. The harvest of the earth seems nearly ripe, and just as in the natural world we observe that after the seed is sown, a long period of cold and storms intervenes before the plant is full grown, but that when once the ears of corn appear the ripening frequently goes on with marvellous rapidity, so is it with this mundane economy. The discovery and opening up of the positions and sites of long-buried, long-forgotten cities, the universal spread of knowledge, and finally the wonderful way in which the thread of prophecy seems to be unravelling itself, all point in the same direction. I know that every age is apt to think that it is near the coming of the Son of Man; but there are many very extraordinary events that seem to distinguish the present from former ages and to justify the hope that the "earnest expectation of creation" will before very long be brought about. T. W.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Chapter I.—Introductory.

I. IT is very wonderful that God should at any time have entered into covenant with His creatures. Nevertheless the Holy Scriptures assure us that the Infinite One has on several occasions made friendly league with man—thus displaying His own surpassing condescension, and raising men into a position of peculiar dignity and responsibility.

The covenant made by God with the patriarch Abraham concerns the whole human race; and is so fundamental to the whole work of redemp-

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tion, so inwrought into the structure of Holy Writ, and so decisive an indication of God's designs for the world, as to demand devout and careful study.

It is the second covenant recorded in sacred history. Based on the covenant made with Noah after the flood regarding the earth and the seasons, this covenant takes up the spiritual development of the human race, and carries it on to the ultimate point where the curse is lost in blessing, and out of the old world of sin and sorrow, appears a new world of eternal peace and joy.

In tracing the Abrahamic covenant we once more begin with an individual; and this conduces to simplicity: we are again at the beginning of the ways, and can take care to make good our start in studying the great theme of redemption. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; the Hebrew nation with its twelve tribes; the Messiah in the fulness of the times; all nations, first in elected representation, and afterwards in aggregate fulness: these are the finger posts to guide us on our journey.

The formation of the Abrahamic covenant lies embedded in the biography of that prince of pilgrims, the father of the faithful, the friend (the beloved) of God. To understand the life we must study the covenant which gave the life its purpose and dignity. This is a great advantage—it is biography and divinity combined. Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years; speaking roughly, the covenant was proposed to him when he was seventy, was fully accepted and acted upon by him when he was seventy-five; its most critical and improbable pledge was fulfilled to him when he was one hundred; and the final trial of his faith and the last confirmation to him of the covenant took place when he was one hundred and twenty-five; after which he lived fifty years more to see the precious covenant confirmed to his son Isaac, as his joint-heir and successor. These figures focalise the covenanting transactions between God and Abraham, which are thus seen flooding the large ripe centre of Abraham's manhood with a divine splendour.

The covenant which was first and most fully made with Abraham was afterwards renewed, as we have said, to Isaac. After that it was confirmed to Jacob. These three pilgrim fathers thus became three covenantees of the covenant now to be investigated. These three are God's great bondholders. The promises are made over to them expressly by name. God was, and is, and ever will be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The covenanting is complete from this point—and being complete, and the covenantees having run their course, the covenant is abiding. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

The people of Israel, in their generations of old—at least some of them—had a clear insight into the peculiar force of the Abrahamic covenant. It was as a rock beneath their feet. Their own national covenant, entered into at Sinai, was another thing. Its code was onerous, its demands exacting, its sanctions alarmingly severe. That was their law. When they kept it, in a measurable national sense, so as to be free from apostasy from their God,—then it was well with them as a nation. But when they widely and generally broke it, it gave them no foothold of security. It denounced them. It invoked their enemies to invade and smite them, or even to carry them away captive into foreign lands. Not so the covenant made with their fathers—when

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they remembered *that*, they remembered that behind the law there was grace. And so it came to pass that when for very shame they could not plead the covenant made with themselves as a nation in the wilderness they still could plead the covenant made with their fathers at an earlier date. What bearing this has on unfulfilled prophecy may be discussed further on in our inquiry.

Meantime, if anything were yet wanting for arousing in the minds of CHRISTIANS an interest in the Abrahamic covenant, it would be supplied by the way in which that fundamental compact is spoken of in the New Testament. When the child Jesus was born, the godly Zachariah, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke of the event as a proof that God had "remembered the holy covenant, the oath that He sware to our father Abraham" (Luke i. 72, 73). The Apostle Peter, preaching in Solomon's Porch, and wishing to conciliate his Hebrew brethren, exclaims: "Ye are sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Acts iii. 25). Most true! their national life was derived primarily from the Abrahamic covenant, and so they were its sons. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans (chap. iv.), attributes it to the covenant with Abraham that the patriarch was constituted father of all believers, and that all believers, Gentiles and Jews alike, are heirs of the promise, heirs of the inheritance, heirs of the world with the renowned patriarch: writing to the Galatians (chap. iii.), he finds in the Abrahamic covenant a preintimation of the good news of the justification of the Gentiles by faith and of the further bestowment of the Spirit; affirms the Abrahamic covenant to be both older and mightier than the law; and distinctly teaches that the "one seed" of that covenant "is Christ," into whom by faith Gentiles are incorporated. The letter to the Hebrews (chap. vi.), if possible, goes further still, since it makes the covenant-oath of God sworn to Abraham to be one of two immutable things by which we have mighty consolation and a sure hope of an inheritance within the veil whither Jesus has already entered as our forerunner.

II. The *Hebrew word* for covenant is "b'rith." The first interesting circumstance regarding this word is that in ordinary dealings between man and man it means the very same as our word "covenant"—namely, a coming together, a mutual agreement, a compact, a league. Thus b'rith is used of the mutual agreement come to by Abraham and Abimelech (Gen. xxi. 22-32), by Laban and Jacob (Gen. xxxi. 44-54), by Jonathan and David (1 Sam. xviii. 3; xxiii. 18), by Abner and David (2 Sam. iii. 12, 13), by all Israel and David (2 Sam. iii. 21; v. 3), and by the Gibeonites and Israel under Joshua (Jos. ix. 6, 7, 11, 15, 16). In several of these examples, and notably five times in the last named, b'rith is rendered "league" in the "Authorised" English Version. We may add that in Mal. ii. 14, "the wife of thy youth" is termed "the wife of thy covenant." In each of these cases the agreement was mutual. The proposal might come from one side only, and the parties might not in all respects be equal, and in some of these they were not, but in all alike both sides are at least consenting parties to the transaction. This element of mutual consent becomes supremely interesting when the word b'rith is applied to transactions between God and man. For we naturally

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expect to find the same element still present, and yet are constrained to admire the Divine condescension which is evident when we find that element there. We reflect that it is proper to the Divine Being to command ; but does He then at the same time seek His creatures' consent ? We may indeed be tempted to shrink from so representing the Eternal Majesty, and may be ready to suppose rather that the word b'rith must, when applied to Him, lose something of its ordinary significance. Still, however true it may be that the higher usage throws a sacred halo around the word, we do well to recollect that the association of ideas springing from its familiar application must always cling to it more or less closely. God enters into a b'rith with Abraham—what is a b'rith ? Well, whatever it is, Abraham entered into a b'rith with Abimelech—Laban into a b'rith with Jacob—Jonathan into a b'rith with David,—and so forth freely all round. There is one instance in which b'rith is so used twice in the same connection, first of a transaction between God and men and then of a transaction between men and men, as that only an unjustifiable violence can hinder the effect on the reader's mind. "And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal unto Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my b'rith with you, and ye shall make no b'rith with the inhabitants of this land" (Judges ii. 1, 2). Is b'rith "covenant?" Then you must say: "I will not break my *covenant* with you, and ye shall make no *covenant* with the inhabitants of this land." Or do you prefer "league?" Then it must run thus: "I will not break my *league* with you, and ye shall make no *league* with the inhabitants of this land."

We thus find the word b'rith in its general usage to be so strongly charged with the notion of a real compact by free consent between two or more parties, that we should clearly not be justified in assuming the word to be divested of that significance, even when the b'rith itself is on one side Divine, save under stern necessity. Hence it follows that if in point of fact we discover the Most High earnestly wooing the consent of His servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to accept His terms of treaty—if we observe Him diligently cultivating their willinghood—if we perceive Him renewing His proposals to them from time to time and seeking to enamour them of His plans that they may freely and deliberately acquiesce in the great transaction (and certainly these are marked features in His recorded dealings with them),—then surely our warrant is ample to hold fast the true covenant conception of the word b'rith even when applied to the Divine arrangement now to be considered.

Yet we must not therefore become hard and narrow in our interpretation of the provisions of this covenant. It *is* a covenant—it has its stipulations—we may speak of its bonds. But it does not follow that we can measure and weigh all its promises. For let us remember that even among men there are covenants and covenants; and that in merely human treaty-making it may happen that although the superficial acreage conveyed is perfectly definite, yet the precious deposits beneath the surface, also conveyed, may be practically illimitable. Most assuredly the Abrahamic covenant has in it something of an unknown quantity; for one of its most marked provisions is the bestowment by the Divine Covenanter of HIMSELF upon those whom His gracious treaty primarily

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embraces. Or do we, after all, know exactly how much is implied when the Creator becomes the covenant God of a man or the covenant God of a nation? On the contrary, must not the most confirmed Sadducee feel that it would be rather presumptuous to inscribe on the portals of the Cave of Machpelah: "Here lie men who were once in covenant with God, but who are now dead and done with for ever?" And, in like manner, must not the most strenuous disbeliever in a future Hebrew nationality admit that nothing short of the most irrefragable evidence can warrant his inscribing on the metaphorical grave of the defunct people of Israel the bold words: "A nation once, great and strong; made so by Him who promised to be to them a God; but, for all that, now a nation no more for ever?"

To the evidence, brethren, to the evidence; for how can we limit the Almighty merely by a few generalities? Say we of these and the other Israelitish promises: "Mere temporal mercies—mere national benefits?" Much easier to say, than to determine how much GOD can be to a nation which He once takes in hand. If He scatter that nation, truly it is scattered; but if He promise again to gather it, who shall say Him nay? Again, therefore, we urge—To the evidence, brethren: first and foremost to the Abrahamic covenant itself in the fair meaning of its stupendous assurances; then to the Sinai covenant as temporally and subordinately executory of the Abrahamic; and, finally, to the new national covenant foretold by the prophets and obviously framed to carry out the Abrahamic efficaciously and triumphantly to its cosmopolitan ends; yea, and not the Israel-and-Judah covenant alone, but the covenants also with Samaria and with Sodom, and any other covenant noted on the sacred page, together with all less formal promises, so that they are fitted to guide us rightly to decipher the designs intended of God to be embraced by the leading covenant of which we treat.

But we have to notice one or two further particulars concerning the word b°rith; and the next is the way in which it is fitted to carry with it the idea of sacrifice. The word itself is by scholars supposed to mean by derivation *a cutting in pieces*, "from the custom of going between the parts of the cut animals" (Fürst), "since it was the custom in making solemn covenants to pass between the divided parts of victims" (Gesenius). Be that as it may, it is a fact that the verb commonly coupled with it to express the idea of "making" (*karat*) means "to cut up,"—the full phrase being, to cut up a b°rith, to cut up a league or covenant. Even if it be true, as some have thought, that the idea of *eating* is latent in b°rith, that by no means excludes the idea of sacrifice; since the covenanting parties may have been in the habit of feasting on the covenant sacrifice; and in some cases it is clear they did so. We shall have occasion to return to this subject of covenanting by sacrifice further on.

Another interesting fact about the word b°rith is its interchangeableness with the word oath. Where there is a covenant there is also an oath. The covenant is cut up—the covenant is also sworn. An example or two of this will suffice for the present—of its significance by-and-bye. Abimelech and his friends said unto Isaac: "Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee" (Gen. xxvi. 28). "For the Lord thy God is a merciful

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God; He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them" (Deut. iv. 31). Let the word Beersheba be our reminder of this association between covenant and oath. "Wherefore they called that place Beersheba [oath-well]; because there they sware both of them. Thus they made a covenant [a b'rith] at Beersheba" (Gen. xxi. 31, 32). Had the fact thus put into memento for us been observed, a singular error regarding the Abrahamic covenant might possibly have been avoided.

III. Intending in the following chapters to pursue a method rather historical and expository than dogmatic, the writer is not anxious to formulate all the propositions which he supposes the evidence will establish; nevertheless it is possible that most readers would feel assisted by having set before them, here at the outset, the principal conclusions which have commended themselves to the writer's mind. Accordingly the following are submitted under earnest protest against the reader's taking any one of them for granted. They are designed to awaken interest, and not to forestall individual investigation. They are these:—

First, that God made one covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and one only; and that any appearances to the contrary are due chiefly on the one hand to the comprehensiveness of the covenant itself, and on the other to the educational purposes which the repetition of it from time to time was intended to serve.

Second, that this covenant (which for convenience we call the Abrahamic) was primarily made with the patriarch Abraham, to whom the promises were most fully applicable, and whose deliberate consent was most distinctly secured; but, next to him, was then renewed and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, who also freely responded to the Divine call to become "joint-heirs" of the covenant promises with their father Abraham; and that, thus made over to these three believing and obedient worthies, the Abrahamic covenant is fixed and inviolable as an embodiment of the unchangeable counsel of God.

Third, that the widest and furthest design of the Abrahamic covenant is to secure blessing to all the families of the earth.

Fourth, that for the conveyance of this blessing a peculiar Abrahamic seed is required, extending outwardly from one great and mighty nation to an assembly of nations, and inwardly to the Redeemer of the Human Race, who is the means of life, unity, and power for blessing to the whole of the Abrahamic seed.

Fifth, that the land of Canaan, granted as an æonial or everlasting inheritance to Abraham and his seed, is an essential part of the Abrahamic covenant.

Sixth, that circumcision is not a distinct covenant by itself, but is a sign of the whole covenant made with Abraham.

Seventh, that the Abrahamic covenant is to be clearly distinguished from the Sinaitic; the latter being made, not with all Abraham's seed, but with Israel only, and with Israel but for a time; so that the abrogation of the Sinaitic covenant defeats no provision in the older, wider, and more gracious covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Eighth, that the new national covenant promised by Jeremiah is called "new" not with respect to the Abrahamic, to which indeed it gives

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effect, but solely in contrast with the legal covenant of Sinai, which it supersedes.

It may further interest the reader to add that in the course of our investigation the following inquiries may be expected to arise:—

1. How is it that in negotiating the Abrahamic covenant no mediator appears? Is it because the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob is the Angel of the Divine Presence, and so Himself the Angel and Mediator of this covenant?

2. What is the meaning of the name JEHOVAH—or, as we shall presume to write it, YEHWEH (giving our reasons in due course); and does that meaning suggest any explanation of the singular statement in Exodus vi., that El Shaddai was not known by this special name (YHWH) to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while yet we find it frequently upon their lips?

3. Does the Abrahamic covenant seem to require the recall to life of the three original covenantees?

4. Will the land of promise appear on the new earth?

5. How came it about that Abraham was promised a Land and yet looked for a Heavenly City?

May the great favour be vouchsafed that the theme suggesting these inquiries may be profitably pursued! JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

THE CHURCH BOOK.

1. ARE our names in Thy Book, O Lord?
Hast Thou graciously written them down,
To be read in the cloudless light,
When Thou gettest Thy throne and crown?

2. We think we will worship Thee best
When we meet Thee in glory there,
When there is no more room for doubt,
And no more need for prayer.

3. This is surely our weakness, Lord;
The songs of the smitten are sweet,
When they spring from the heart of faith,
And rise to Thy glorious seat.

4. The angels, in vision, are seen
Surrounding the throne of that day;
But the ransomed from earth appear
As nearer the Sovereign than they.

5. The King is the wonderful man
Who wept at the grave of His friend;
The sorrows of those that are His,
In glory eternal shall end. THETA.

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. I.

The Incarnation considered as a Fact.

IT is proposed to indite a series of studies of the Life of Christ—the independent results of an independent inquirer. Aid from others who have wrought in the same field will not be sought after, except as it may bear upon textual and chronological correctness: the aim being, not to expand or illustrate an historical narrative, still less to make a compilation from authorities, but simply to record what is discovered to one amongst the multitude of worshipping searchers in the mines of Divine Truth; to open the soul before the Gospels like a receptive eye, and fix the pictures that the streaming light conveys.

It need scarcely be said to the readers of the RAINBOW, that the historical integrity of the four evangelists is absolutely unquestioned by the writer. He must be wanting in every essential to a sound judgment upon the point, as well as in spiritual insight, who does not perceive the naked incredibility of any other hypothesis.

The Gospels are taken to be records sufficiently full, minute, and accurate, to convey to us all essential knowledge of the facts, words and deeds of the Lord Christ's life, and bearing sufficient traces of human imperfection to convince us of the honest aims of the several simple-minded writers to render a true and independent testimony. They are believed to bear evidence that miraculous inspiration only supplied such help to a sufficiently complete narrative as the human faculties unaided could not dispense with, and never at any time controlled so as to abolish the individuality of the writers.

That we have four witnesses, and that the records of the four should be essential to give an all-round view of Christ is a valuable fact, suggesting the deference which we should pay to diversities of perception respecting the objects of Christian faith. The object adored and cherished by all alike is yet beheld according to the subjective capacity of the individual, so that a combination of testimonies is requisite to any fullness of report, and when all are combined the half is not told, the next generation will see what the present are blind to.

It will always be essential that different minds and hearts should bring their testimonies, compare them and exchange them; for like those chemical compositions which when intercepting the path of a ray, absorb some and intensify others of the constituents of light, human souls are so compounded that the whole of Divine Truth is held by none, while each has something that the other has not. Only in the limpid drops from the rain-cloud is light so refracted that everything is present and nothing exaggerated: and it is not a descending sheet, but water infinitely individualised that gives us the rainbow, while the more the myriads that conspire to delight us, the brighter and clearer the revelation.

Need we say no true life of Christ can be presented which omits the Incarnation. *That* is the axis upon which the sphere of Christian truth revolves, the standing mystery, charm, and glory of the Christian creed, the supreme creative act of God, the key to past and future, the

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sublime "bridal of the earth and skies," which issued in a race of gods; the miracle which justifies all miracle, and the fact which slits the consistency of modern theories of creation from which the supernatural is banished.

Towards this event all previous history laboured; from it all subsequent events have sprung. Displace this foundation rock, and the earthquake in the soul is accompanied by a frightful eclipse of faith, hope is without a sanction, human life without an example, and morals without an authority.

If now we say a word on the rational basis for faith in this stupendous fact, it is not that we believe that reason *per se* will ever lead to its acceptance. It is the writer's conviction that the rational faculty in man never begot Christian faith, never even confirmed it, only glorified it. Only therefore to glorify this centre and circumference of Christian doctrine do we proceed to say that for him who starts at the thought of God creeping into the virgin mother and issuing as a puling babe—even if he had never thought of that question, with an acorn in his hand, while the autumn winds tore in vain at the mighty oak above his head, or crushed an eagle's egg beneath his feet, while the mother beat the clouds and flew to peck the sun—an answer is found for him in the mind that seizes on the problem and turns it over in the crucible of reflection. *You* who thus think are a solecism in creation, when compared with the creatures that surround you. You are a monstrous breach in the natural order, an eternal and impassable gulf separates you from the preceding link in the chain. You are witness to a supernatural intervention—an epoch maker if you are the first of the race. You lend meaning to all that is behind you, hope to the future, and purpose to the present.

Humanity is the eternal shadow which attests the substantive reality of the Incarnation.

No theory of the sublime fact can transcend in mystery the incarnation of the human soul and spirit. That an apparatus of water and nitrogen, lime and carbon, and iron, should become the prison of the reasoning, reflecting, aspiring, loving, worshipping, creative and God-yearning human spirit is a mystery of mysteries. That it should be limited to time and space, be the seeming sport of chance, and be absolutely married to the earthly destinies of a piece of clay—the entrance of the Godhead into this human world is only the analogue of that. Every single man is an all-sufficient demonstration of the truth of the Incarnation. Every generation furnishes a thousand-million proofs of the same eternal verity. The argument and the demonstrations run with the moments and the years. It is the first cry of the race and the apostolic message of the countless victims of infanticide. Let human life appear ever so purposeless and brushed into forgetfulness like a morning fog, it cannot live without hailing Christ as Lord. Alike from the dark corners of heathendom and the sunnier spot of nominal Christianity, the girdle of the earth resounds with ceaseless cries that "Christ was born."

Now mark how this fact of the Incarnation bears upon the controversy about evolution. We trust no reader of the RAINBOW is startled by that word. Evolution is a fact of history, if not of creation. Approached from the scientific standpoint Buckle discovers it in the history of civilisation, and Max Muller in the progress of religions. It can be detected

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in the history of every human life—readily in your own, my reader, and yet to the Christian consciousness a minutely superintending Providence is perceptible in all. God in history, national or personal, is evident as the sun. Viewed as a method by which God has wrought His will in matter and in mind, who can object to it? The Christian can accept it and yet know that when the first floss of protoplasm varnished the deep sea floor the Virgin Mary was preparing. Man is clearly in process of evolution now. Homer had no knowledge of colour; the soldiers of Tacitus, unless he belied them, blubbered like children. Addison saw no scenery in Italy. Newton saw indigo when it was not. The tree of humanity bore a new fruit when in the eighteenth century the great composers made music only less immortal than the words to which it was conjoined. The perception and love of natural beauty is one of the latest flowers born in the nineteenth century, and "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." But what we say is that, while we hold evolution, considered as a method of the Divine working, to be not inconsistent with anything essential to the Divine attributes, yet we are not shut up to that or any other theory as yet propounded, and as Christians can prove its deficiency.

It may indeed be that to accomplish a specific purpose, even the Almighty may find but one method adequate, and that placing before Himself a great end, He is content that His method of procedure towards it should temporarily involve His character in obscurity and misunderstanding which only the glorious fulfilment of His aim can clear away. That may be, and may help us in the consideration of the evil in the world; but what is certain is, that the theory of evolution is pierced by the fact of the Incarnation. For just as evidently as man escapes from being welded on to his simian ancestry by virtue of his spiritual endowment, which removes the brute from him far as the dog-star is from the earth, so when Jesus Christ came in the flesh, while to outward appearance nothing more than an integer in the series, on the spiritual side He was exalted above His fellows higher than the heavens. Here was a stupendous chasm and gulf in the evolution of creation's tribes. It had its analogue when into a generation of apes the seed of man was cast, but this casting of a Divine seed into man himself is another and infinitely more marvellous leap and bound, which rends in sunder the theory of age-long formative, processes and influences, as the invariable law of Nature's working.

We see on the very sublimest scale a free and sovereign will breaking in upon an existing order and exhibiting to an adoring universe a new creation; breaking in, as we say, was done before, when man was made transcendantly superior to his earthly contemporaries, and now God incarnate infinitely higher than he.

The theory then of evolution failing to account for man and for Christ is therefore incomplete. It can however be accepted by Christians, not as vindicating a free and progressive career for nature's blind potentialities, apart from an energising Godhead, but, supplemented by revealed facts, as enabling us to indicate more clearly the points at which a sovereign will, always secretly working, suddenly uplifted itself, as Leviathan from the deep, making manifest the Maker and the Ruler formerly buried beneath the waves of sequence.

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Creation's God rose from the waves when man was made, and still higher when Christ was born, and it was in the very hour when the murmurs of infant weakness were heard amid the adoring stillness of the manger, that Jehovah most manifestly sat upon His throne.

HENRY DEACON.

REVELATION AND ITS EVIDENCES.

No. II.

HAVING in a former paper spoken at some length of the nature of the miracles of Scripture, and specially those of the Gospel, we cannot enter with any fulness into them as contrasted in that respect with those of Rome. But we must say a very few words.

In the first place, a hundred special cases might be cited of works plainly beyond human power or the spontaneous agencies of nature. Such were the cure of the man born blind, the cure of the paralytic, the raising of Jairus' daughter and Lazarus, the healing of the lame man by Peter and John (John ix.; xi.; Mark v.; Acts iii.). Whole classes of Roman wonders, readily produced by human means, are wholly absent from Scripture. Such are the whole series of alleged marvels in connection with relics, pictures, images. The appearances of the dead to the living as a sign is never related in Scripture. The one or two cases which appear to be such are otherwise accounted for. The appearance of Christ to His disciples, the great miracle in dependence on which they lived and laboured and died, was not the appearance of the dead to the living, but the appearance of a living man in all the completeness of human nature. Some narratives of miracle there are, no doubt, in Scripture where signs such as are alleged to have taken place at tombs and similar places, might have taken place without our being able to rank them in the catalogue of proper miracle. If, for example, of the multitudes of sick folks of every variety of sickness to which our poor nature is heir, who were brought upon one occasion to Christ for cure, *some proportion*, and these too generally of one class of malady, were healed, while the majority, and of some classes of sickness all those thus affected, were unhealed, in that case we should most justly refuse to acknowledge the cures wrought to have been miracle proper, and insist that we had no right to set them down as beyond the spontaneous agencies of nature working through the human imagination (Matt. iv. 24). When the fame of Christ as a worker of miracles was established in the minds of a considerable number of people, and when as a consequence many sick people were brought to Him, all possessed of the sense of His power, and seeing all around them equally possessed of the faith in Him, we should think it quite within the power of nature to effect a cure, which would probably have all the appearance of being perfect, upon some of those present. This, we believe, to be all that has been in similar cases claimed on the part of the Church of Rome. But the miracle of Christ on such occasions is wholly out of this category. We are told that every manner of disease existed among those brought to Him: we are told that great numbers thus affected were brought: but

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we are also told that it was not in some *kinds* of sickness, or with a proportion of those brought that healing was effected, but that every manner of disease, and every individual brought before Him, were healed. The power of the imagination has never wrought a wonder of such a nature, and thus we see that as regards the *nature* of the miracles of Scripture they stand upon a wholly different footing from the alleged miracles of Rome with which Mill compares them.

Having thus compared the alleged miracles of Rome with those of the New Testament as regards the parties by whom those miracles were respectively brought forth, and also as regards the nature of the works themselves, we will now compare them in regard of the parties to whom they were proposed for acceptance. We will lightly touch upon three particulars, which will show the utter want of resemblance, and the incontestible superiority of the evidence attaching to the miracles of the Gospel.

The miracles of Rome, Mill truly tells us, were never presented for acceptance to the "*incredulous*" (238). They never were. They were always presented before those who already fully believed in the system in proof of which they were said to be wrought and in the power of those by whom they were said to be wrought. The exact opposite to this, however, is the case with the miracles of the New Testament. They were wrought, as the rule, before the incredulous. Christ's miracles were of the most public kind, and of the spectators more than nine-tenths did not believe that great claim of His to be their Messiah, in attestation of which Christ performed His works. It was the performance of the works which drew to Christ such few comparatively of His countrymen as accepted His claim.

Again, the miracles of Rome, Mill tells us, were wrought before those who were already "trained in the persuasion that it is a duty to believe and a sin to doubt." What an immensity this implies! The spectators of the Romish wonders were people who thought it wrong to entertain a doubt but that the wonders they were summoned to see were both truly wrought and truly miraculous! Their acceptance then of them is of little value. But such a view attaches not at all to the miracles of the Gospel. Those before whom Christ and His apostles wrought their works never appear to have been taught any such doctrine, even as regards their accredited teachers. If they were taught anything of the works of Christ it would rather be that it would be a merit to doubt of His works. The acceptance then of Christ's works as truly miraculous is quite a different thing from the acceptance of the alleged Romish wonders by their spectators.

Once more, the spectators of Romish alleged miracles had no power to examine either into their nature or their reality. It was sin to doubt them. It was heresy to examine them. But with regard to Scripture miracles, while there was the full power to examine them, examination was never even deprecated. It would have been of no use to do so. The very deprecation of examination would only have provoked curiosity. But nothing of the kind was or could be attempted. The ever-present eye of the multitude, the searching unfriendly gaze of the learned and the powerful classes was ever upon the works of Christ and His disciples. Had there been anywhere a weak point it would have been discovered

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and exposed, and Christianity would have been stifled in its birth as an imposture, which sought to rest the credit of a false Christ upon false miracles. If the miracles of the Bible from first to last, in Old and New Testament, are examined, it will be always found that they were wrought in precisely the opposite circumstances from those of Rome. Egypt witnessed their grand opening. It was when Israel was disobedient and incredulous that miracle was brought forth to them. Christ and His apostles wrought their great works in the hostile and incredulous lands of the Gentile and the Jew.

It seems a strange recommendation of the alleged miracles of Rome beyond those of Scripture, to say that they only met with a partial belief even in quarters where one would have looked for a cordial reception. And yet Mill seems to think this is a recommendation of their evidence, as Hume certainly did in regard of an alleged miracle recorded by Cardinal de Retz. He says of the miracles of Rome, and this with especial regard to those of them which have the highest amount of testimony, that they are "miracles which no one but a Roman Catholic, and by no means every Roman Catholic, believes." (238.) In our judgment this is a very grave discredit to those miracles. Certain we are that if a charge of this kind could be brought against the miracles of the New Testament it would be esteemed by very many minds a sufficient reason for refusing them all belief whatsoever. For our own part, we must confess that a charge of this nature established against the Christian miracles would shake our own faith in them very considerably.

Suppose, for example, it could be said with truth of the miracles of Jesus Christ, and in particular of those said to have been wrought by Him in the most public manner, that no one outside the circle of His own disciples had ever believed them to have been really wrought, that without a single exception the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Bethany, Chorazin, Capernaum, and other places where Christ is said to have wrought in the most public manner many wonderful works, could either have said that they were ignorant that any works of the kind had ever been even attempted, or, that they had been attempted but never seemed to them worthy of any credence, and that no one except a little knot of followers around Christ attached to them the smallest importance, who does not see how very serious a discredit would hereby have accrued to the miracles of Christ? But such a charge has never been made. It would have been made over and over again in the first centuries of Christianity, and re-echoed in every city of the Roman Empire, if it could. The Jewish opponents of Christianity would have said that their countrymen had known nothing, and believed nothing of those miracles which were vaunted so shamelessly in the Christian Scriptures. But they could not. The Jews did not accept Jesus of Nazareth for His miracles, but they allowed that He wrought miracles. The nation to this day continuing in their rejection of Christ's claims, does not pretend to dispute His works. The conviction of their nation in the lifetime of Christ on earth was too strong, and has come down by too unbroken a tradition to allow them now to attempt a denial. It cannot be said of the miracles of Christ that no one but His disciples believed them. Numbers who were not His disciples became His disciples because they believed them. The

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nation of Israel accepted His miracles as true, while they, for other reasons which seemed to them sufficient, rejected His claims notwithstanding. The attitude of the unbelieving Jew towards the miracles of Jesus amounts in itself to proof of their truth.

Again, suppose that in the early Churches there had existed any party of importance, or any party whatever, however inconsiderable, who denied the truth of the miracles of Christ or those of His apostles, who does not see that here indeed would exist a very grave discredit to their reality and truth? People would most naturally and most reasonably say, "O, here were persons who by their profession of Christianity must have been favourably disposed to accept the alleged miracles; who, from their position, whether as acquainted with the alleged witnesses of the miracles, or from having been themselves in the position to know whether they were wrought or not, and yet these men did not themselves believe!" What would be the natural and inevitable inference? It would be either said that their knowledge of the witnesses of the miracles was such that they did not think them worthy of any credit, or that having been themselves witnesses of feats alleged to be miraculous, and having sufficient means to judge whether they were of this nature, and were performed, they could not give them their assent. We would at once conclude most unfavourably against the miracles. We would set them down either as downright impostures, or extraordinary but not supernatural feats magnified into miracle by credulity and predisposition. Of the witnesses who had attested miracles, but to whom credence was refused by their contemporary fellow Christians, we would say, doubtless there was very considerable ground for this refusal! Those witnesses were probably known to be men who would not disdain such a thing as *pious fraud* for what they believed to be a good cause, or who were of such an ignorant and a credulous character that their testimony on any subject would be of little moment, and least of all of moment in the case of miracle which requires testimony of the very highest character. And so we would probably dismiss the whole question of early Christian miracle as incapable of being established with us of the nineteenth century, when it was rejected by Christian men who were either said to have witnessed that which was claimed as miracle, or who, knowing the character of the eye witnesses, did not think them worthy of belief. Such a thing as the refusal of belief to the miracles of the New Testament is not upon record. The miracles of Christ, the miracles of the apostles of Christ, were universally accepted by all parties in the professing Christian Church.

Now it so happens that we have in the circumstances of the early Christian Churches the very ones which would have given rise to denial to miracle upon the part of considerable numbers of their members, if such a denial had been possible. Those circumstances were very similar to, in their essence in fact identical with, those which produced a denial by some members of the Church of Rome of miracles alleged to have been wrought by other members of that Church. We refer here in particular to the miracles said to have been wrought in the eighteenth century, in France, at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, on behalf of the Jansenist party in the Gallican Church, which miracles were altogether rejected by the enemies of the Jansenists, the acute and powerful Jesuit body.

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Let us take a case very parallel in its circumstances with this, viz., the case of the Apostle Paul in the Church of Corinth. Paul had many bitter and influential enemies in that church (2 Cor. x. 10). He had in that church as his enemies and opponents men who set up to be themselves apostles, and who strenuously denied his claim to be an apostle at all (1 Cor. ix. 1). Paul himself was not backward in casting upon them the very same charge which they brought against him. Words cannot be stronger than those he used against them when he said, "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. xi. 13). There can be no doubt that the men whom Paul here denounced with a condemnation so sweeping and so terrible would in every way in their power retaliate upon him. Their enmity towards him, their resolution to expose him and his claims to derision and contempt, would equal that of the relentless Jesuit body against their rivals of the Jansenist party in the Gallican Church.

They did seek to do so. They attacked him on the tenderest point. They called in question and denied his claim to be an apostle. He was not one of the original twelve. He was now falsely claiming to have since been called. Accordingly they carefully raked up everything connected with Paul in order, if possible, to bring him into disrepute and overthrow his claims to apostleship. In their petty spite against the object of their bitterest hate, they descend to attack his very personal appearance and mode of speech. Unable to deny the power of his letters, they say, "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (2 Cor. x. 10). Their presence on the spot, their numbers, their influence, their persevering and artful attacks upon his character and authority, had almost gained over the Church at Corinth to their side. Moral misconduct on the part of many of the Corinthian Christians about to be exposed and punished by Paul on his approaching visit to them, united to the insidious attacks on his authority on the part of his ecclesiastical foes, had brought the Church of Corinth to "seek a proof of Christ speaking in him" at all (2 Cor. xiii. 1-3).

In opposition to all this Paul boldly claimed to be an apostle of Jesus Christ as truly as Peter was (1 Cor. ix. 1-5). He will abate no jot or tittle of his high pretension. He gloried in his call by Christ. Despised by the world of his old life, he rejoiced to think that the Divine Man had honoured him. In opposition to the attacks of his enemies he insists that he is an apostle, and challenges every gainsayer to dispute his claims. He appeals above all, and beyond all other proof, to *miracle*. He does not appeal to his conversion. That had not been witnessed by friend or foe at Corinth. He does not appeal to those visions and revelations which God had vouchsafed to him. Whatever they were to him, to others they were as nothing save as accepted on his word (2 Cor. xii. 1-5). He will appeal for proof of his disputed apostleship to miracles wrought before the whole Church where he pleaded his cause. Miracles were a necessary proof of apostleship. Without them no other claims could stand. He might have every other apparent

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claim, but if God had not enabled him to exert and put forth supernatural power, and to put it forth before the eyes of men so as to satisfy their understanding, no one was warranted to accept him as an apostle in the sense that Peter, James, and John were apostles of Christ.

"Truly," Paul says to the hesitating Church of Corinth, to his few staunch friends, to his bitter unrelenting foes—"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you, in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds:" "in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles." In one particular sign, impossible to counterfeit, he claims a pre-eminence: "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." Here was a challenge to his enemies! Here was opportunity to have confounded him if he spoke falsely, and in confounding him to have gratified the bitter hatred of their heart. But there was no attempt at this. They could not fling back at him the indignant taunt he flung against them, that of being a "deceitful worker." The great apostle vindicated by miracle undisputed, because indisputable, the claim to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and as such, and only as such, he came to Corinth and put down all opposition. How would it have been if the enemies of Paul at Corinth had been able to deny his claims? His authority at Corinth would have been overthrown. His claims would have been denied. If we had ever heard of him, which probably we never would, it would have been as a shameless Jew who had sought by false wonders to impose pretended claims upon men and been exposed and put to shame.

No small confirmation then it is for the miracles of the New Testament that of them it can be truly said that multitudes outside of the Churches of Christ believed them to be genuine and not pretended wonders, though for a variety of reasons which may readily suggest themselves to the mind, they did not always, or even generally, lead them to adopt the faith of Christ. To our apprehension the assent of the unbelieving Jewish nation to the reality of the miraculous works of Jesus is in itself a valid and incontestible proof that they were really wrought as the Christian Scriptures relate them. Strongly confirmatory, too, it is of them that throughout the early Christian Churches, in which even then we discern but too plainly the same spirit of party and division which so often manifests itself in Christendom now, there was never any idea so much as suggested of disputing the miraculous power claimed by the apostles and others. Above all, in this respect, we point to the case of the Apostle Paul. Universally known throughout the Roman world; having connection, whether by personal presence or letter, with the chief of the early Churches; having in every Church a party, the Judaising, disposed to regard his teaching with more or less of suspicion; bitterly opposed by this party in several of the Churches; his claims to be an apostle at all contested in others; personal enmity on the part of influential persons roused frequently against him for his uncompromising denunciation against sin; throughout all this loftily maintaining his claim to be in no respect inferior to the very chiefest apostles, while in his labours and success he surpassed them all; grounding his claims to be acknowledged as an apostle upon his public exercise of miraculous power even in the Churches where he had most enemies, and allowing that on such exercise his claim must stand or fall, the fact that no

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party and no man in any one of the Churches ever disputed Paul's claim to miraculous power, is proof that he truly exercised it among them. Else we would most assuredly have heard of denial, of opposition, of evil reports whispered or uttered boldly out. But there was none such. No false brother; no exposed apostle; no expelled incestuous; no narrow-minded Judaizer thwarted; no exalter of Cephas or Apollos above Paul; no puffed-up teacher taught his insignificance; no disputer with the apostle upon some vital article of faith; no brother rebuked for idolatrous connections; no great one jealous of Pauline visions; no open sinner trembling at his coming with the rod; no teacher of circumcision told to hold his tongue; no woman forbid to teach; no pretender to miracle denounced; no Hymenæus or Alexander delivered to Satan; no Phygellus or Hermogenes reproached with cowardly desertion; no Demas held up for his love of the world; no Philetus or Hymenæus labelled to be shunned as profane and vain babblers; no one of these ever dreamed of disputing the lofty claim of Paul when he said—"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you" (2 Cor. xii. 12). They could have disputed his claim if it was not indisputable. Most gladly would they have done so if they could. Everywhere he would have them whispering against his assertions; everywhere would he have had them coming forward to denounce it. It was not outside of the Christian community that Paul had his bitterest enemies. They were within it; professing members of the household of faith. They held their peace, while they hated him because Paul was universally acknowledged to have wrought miracles as well as to have written epistles. To deny it would only be to cover themselves with the same rebuke and derision as for an Israelite to have denied Joshua's power with God when the sun stood still on Ajalon at his bidding, or to have denied Moses' power with God when the sea at the stretching forth of his rod became a way for the ransomed to pass over.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

HEROIC WITNESSES.

1. O GOD, the strength of all Thy saints,
In days of conflict sore,
We thank Thee for the glorious truth
To which they witness bore.

2. Prophets, apostles, martyrs stood,
Upheld by hand Divine,
Before their persecuting foes,
As witnesses of Thine.

3. Redeeming love inspired their hearts,
For Christ they nobly fought,
His character was joy to them,
His glory—all they sought.

4. To their heroic lives we owe
A debt we cannot pay,
For, under God, they sent to us
Our radiant Gospel day.

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5. O Thou of whom this Gospel speaks,
We would be true to Thee,
And hand it down to other men,
That they Thy grace may see.

6. We would be faithful stewards, Lord,
As Thine apostles were,
That sons unborn may know the truth,
And in salvation share.

THETA.

IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE.

THE ignorance of the Bible on the part of many regular church-goers is surprising. We are very far from being a people "mighty in the Scriptures." Chillingworth's sentiment, "The Bible is the religion of Protestants," must be amended for very many, so as to read, "The *unknown* Bible is the religion of Protestants." Take a dozen church members at random, in some places, and ask them to open for you the third chapter of Habakkuk,—by the reading of which Benjamin Franklin, when ambassador to France, so riveted the infidel savans of the Institute, who had been ridiculing the Bible, that, in amazement, they begged to know what book he was reading,—and very likely they will grope for it somewhere in front of the Psalms, or even in Judges. Men in public life, occupying stations of great responsibility, are able to quote Shakespeare accurately; and will refer to Burns, or Byron, or Homer, or Virgil, or other noted names, with classic elegance; but, an attempted quotation from the Bible shows that, with whatever learning the orator may be endowed, his familiarity has not been with the Bible of his country; as he proves incontestably, by mangling and making almost unintelligible the words of David, Isaiah, and Paul, and even of the Saviour.

A story is told by Dr. Taylor in his Yale lectures, of two members of the British House of Commons—men of no mean standing—who met in the lobby of the House after hearing a speech of John Bright's, in which that distinguished man had spoken of Mr. Robert Lowe and his adherents—who had rebelled against the Reform Bill of the Liberal Leader, as—"having gone into the Cave of Adullam."

"I say," inquired the one, "where did Bright get that illustration of his to-night, of the Cave?"

"Oh," was the reply, "I see what you are up to; do you suppose I haven't read the Arabian Nights?"

Probably the halls of Congress could furnish specimens as illustrious of unacquaintance with the Bible. The incident just given is hardly matched by the answer returned to a certain traveller who had "visited Jerusalem," and thought to impress a friend with the fact. The announcement did not "tell;" and was therefore repeated, with a sufficient reminder that something very noteworthy had been accomplished. "Ah! indeed," was the reply, "I thought you had only been visiting a friend abroad who happened to have the same name as that

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man in the Bible." Apocryphal as this last incident may be, it is a certainty that a week ago, a lady generally supposed to be familiar with the Scriptures, remarked, on being told by a friend that her pastor had preached a sermon on the burial of Moses, whom the Lord buried "in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpoer; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day,"—that "she did not believe there were any such words in the Bible."

This is but a sample of much of the Bible ignorance which prevails among persons otherwise well-informed. How needful then, that the Scriptures should be more fully unfolded for their benefit.

A. A. Reinke.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"DID JOB BELIEVE IN A FUTURE STATE?"

Dear Sir,—May it be permitted to reply to the paper in your December number based upon the query, "Did Job believe in a future life?" The writer of that paper most sincerely believes that the Patriarch Job never gave expression to anything which involves his belief in a future state or a resurrection. R. P. will, I trust, pardon my suggesting that perhaps he is mistaken in his exegesis of the book.

We are quite willing to concede the possibility that Job was ignorant of the doctrine of the resurrection, and uttered his sayings in consistency with his ignorance, until we reach the memorable words of Job xix. 23-27. When we seem to have the result of a sudden manifestation of truth given to him by the Divine Spirit to comfort him in the midst of his afflictions, as with the most joyful emotion he exclaims: "O that my words were now written," &c., as though these above all others were worthy of being treasured up in memory. It is to be noted that after these, Job uttered nothing contrary to a belief in the doctrine of the resurrection; for the words in chap. xxxiii. 21 only state most emphatically a truth, that the flesh would pass utterly away, as we know man's flesh does. Why we should consider that sentence to be hyperbolical and not literal we fail to see.

As to the version given of chap. xix. 25-27, we take exception only to the translation of "*Miebsawre.*" Gesenius' lexicon gives two meanings to the particle "the" "*out of*" and "*from.*" It may be under some circumstances "out of" might signify "without;" but here the general scope of the passage holds the idea of seeing out of something, viz., his flesh; not without it. Were we to say we shall see the moons of Jupiter out of the telescope, we should not suggest that we should see them without the telescope, but with its aid. Moreover, the statement in the passage, "I shall see God," involves the necessity of a resurrection; for although Job did, when his time of trial ended, realize that a vindicator arose on his behalf; he certainly did not see this vindicator without his flesh.

May we then suggest that Job did not know, possibly, of the doctrine of the resurrection, until it

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pleased the Almighty to reveal it to him, the revelation of which is given in the above passage. Job certainly seems to have recognised the doctrine of the resurrection and the advent of the Saviour, when in the last days He shall stand upon the earth. It is a glorious truth enunciated by the patriarch, and one not generally acknowledged even now, that Christ's watching Church will see Christ in the flesh, that He will come again to us in the flesh and we also in the flesh meet Him. He is to come to us as He ascended up into heaven (Acts i. 11). He will come as our Great High Priest, not in a spiritual and glorified body, but first in a body of sinless flesh, as Adam's was before he fell. We are to be gathered into His presence, in like bodies, free from sin; but not perfected with the perfection of immortality until we have from the presence and lips of Jesus been washed with the "washing of the Word." As the high priest washed his flesh in the holy place, so did Christ wash His flesh (the Church is His body, His flesh) before He ascended to His Father. And when the high priest of former days came out to bless the people, he again washed his flesh in the holy place; so likewise must our Lord and Great High Priest when He comes out to us, wash His flesh, that is, His Church. To this end, as the high priest when he came out of the most holy place laid aside his glorious apparel, so Christ will in like manner come to us in the flesh, perfect, without sin, so that after passing through a course of instruction from His presence and His lips, we shall be prepared to go with Him into the holiest of all and receive the gifts of immortality and glory.

May we not suppose that Job spake of this time, which is now so near at hand, that it is at our very doors? and that the patriarch saw this, and that we are to believe this, is apparently sustained by the language of the apostle (1 John iv. 2, 3). In our version it reads, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ *is come* in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ *is come* in the flesh, is not of God." Should it not rather be translated "*is coming* in the flesh?" the word is "*Eleluthota*," a participle of "*Erkomai*." Now, out of thirty-two Greek words used in the New Testament, where the word *come* is required, Erkomai is selected in the Greek text in loco; a word which is invariably used by the apostles when speaking of His *future* coming. "This same Jesus so *cometh* in like manner as ye have seen Him go," is the same word, and here rendered *shall so come*, from *Erkomai*. "When the Son of Man *shall come* in His glory," Matt. xxv. 31, is from *Erkomai*; and in the sixth verse, "Behold the bridegroom *cometh*." "Behold He *cometh* with clouds." "There *shall come* in the last days scoffers." "The Lord *cometh* with myriads of His saints." "Who is, and who was, and who is *to come*." All these, had the translators supposed that event to be in the past, would doubtless, to meet their own theological views, have been rendered *is come*.

Now there are sects and parties in whom we recognise the spirit of Antichrist, who yet firmly believe that Christ has come in the flesh; but these do not, nor even does the bulk of Christendom believe that Christ is again coming in the flesh. Yet the words of the Apostle John written some sixty years after the ascension of Jesus, seem to demand this view; as also does the fulfil-

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ment of the law by the Great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, who Himself declared that not one jot nor tittle of the law should pass till all be fulfilled (Matt. v. 17-18); and that He Himself came to fulfil the law.

We can, therefore, scarcely fail to perceive that THE CHRIST, the perfect SECOND MAN ADAM, must come and meet His Church—His own body—in the flesh.

Whether Job understood all this may be doubted, but that he, through the Spirit spoke of it, we believe.

May we further suggest that it is not at all probable that the Great Author of all inspiration would allow a book such as that of Job (the sayings of a man afterwards quoted as a man of faith), to yield such statements as those of the 14th chapter (which, at least, might be possibly misconstrued), to remain with other inspiration without some emphatic statements upon such important truths which should be consistent with other portions of the Word of God.

Such we deem the 19th chapter, verses 25 to 27, to be, more especially as throughout the twenty-three chapters following the nineteenth in this book, nothing occurs which really contradict the thought that the patriarch Job did recognise the resurrection and a glorious future, when in sinless and perfected flesh he should see God.

Yours faithfully,
E. H. TUCKETT.

"THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY."

DEAR SIR,—With rapt attention have I read and re-read this most splendid article—an article which I judge is adapted to every Christian ideal power, fraught, as I feel it is, with Biblical truth, satisfying reason, and lucid demonstration.

Experience tells me that legitimate encouragement is excited by expressions of appreciation, and *thus* I beg your acceptance of my modicum of acknowledgment which I yield with heartfelt gratitude.

But I would yet say another word. In my perusal of the article under consideration, I was ever and anon forcibly reminded of two other of the RAINBOW articles, which I have largely used with good and "telling" effect. I refer to the "Ministry of Evil," by yourself, which appears in the January number for 1875, and to "The Agency of Sin," by General Goodwyn, in the August number for 1874. I refer to these with a twofold object:—

1. I am sure that both yourself and the General will be pleased to have some direct testimony of fresh usefulness, accruing, under Divine grace, by the instrumentalities of the said Articles.

2. May I hope to hear that the Article referred to in the current month's issue will be printed in a separate form? I shall rejoice to find that a demand for it, in hopeful prospective usefulness, will justify a reprint, feeling as I do feel, that it would form in effect an excellent illustrative appendage to "The Ministry of Evil," in its *detached* condition. For myself, I should be glad to be furnished with a hundred copies of each article, which I would stitch together for distribution—nor forgetting the admirable "Practical Suggestions" of Mr. C. Fooks, at page 547, just to hand. I am prepared to do all I can to set "thinking minds a thinking" on these abstruse, but vitally momentous and glorious topics.

Happily, experience impels me

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to say that we are living in a *growingly inquiring time*. Men are not now satisfied (or rather *put off*, for —were they ever *satisfied?*) with an effusion of pedantic theory dogmatically enforced: they are apt with multiplied interrogatives—their "ifs and buts," their "whys and wherefores," and many other etceteras. Well, good: all honour to them in their anxious search for TRUTH!

Amongst the tales that I could tell, it might not be deemed as out of place if I introduce one little incident, and if in doing so I might appear somewhat egotistical, the anecdote itself will make ample apology. I ought to say, then, that in my efforts to arrest attention to the so-called "New Doctrines," it is my wont to "just crack the ice," and then give a warm invitation to "run in and have a little *quiet talk* with me on the matter." Now for the anecdote.

Some time back, after several of these "quiet talk" interviews with a most intelligent young friend of some twenty summers, I again met him by appointment. After a long discussion he became almost mute, but looked sedate and thoughtful: a few minutes elapsed, when, with surprising energy, he broke forth—"I see it now! Yes, I see it! *It must be so!*" And he forthwith spoke with force and eloquence. The picture, in review, is still before me: his words seemed to emanate from the very core of his heart, and the citadel of his brains; while, if possible, the expression of his eyes urged with still greater force his *assurance*. So much for the anecdote. The young man has ever since been a warm supporter and a powerful advocate of the cause which he then espoused.

Of course, I need scarcely say that it was a POWER higher than mine that opened his eyes and established his convictions. To GOD be all the praise! but it is pleasant and glorious to be HIS instrument. May GOD frequently grace HIS servants with the evidence that, "*it must be so!*"

Very truly yours,
HENRY D. H. BURNELL.
52, Boxley Road, Maidstone,
December 2nd, 1880.

TO PRETERISTS.

DEAR SIR,—The position I take as a Futurist has not been, so far as I am aware, assailed, and because I deem it impregnable, I shall be glad if some preterist will disclose to me, and those who think with me, its weak point, if it has one. I contend that the vision shown to John in Patmos, as recorded in Rev. iv. and v., has *not yet* been fulfilled, that the tenth verse of chapter v. shows it to be *post-resurrection* and *pre-millennial;* that the elders are seen *sitting, clothed,* and *crowned;* but have *not yet* begun their reign on the earth. Therefore the book is *still* "in the hands of Him that sitteth on the throne," not yet taken by the Lamb slain, and hence not one of its seals *yet* broken.

A preterist reply will oblige.
Yours faithfully,
NATHANIEL STARKEY.
Hackney, December, 1880.

SHOCKING!

DEAR SIR,—It is sometimes to me a matter of doubt whether we are Christians or Pagans. I went to a meeting the other evening of a professedly religious character. One of the speakers scorned the "new-fangled notions" about the

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limitation of sin and suffering, and said that he quite agreed with Watts that—

"There is a dreadful hell,
And never-ending pains,
Where sinners must with devils dwell
In everlasting chains."

Will you believe it? This fearful blasphemy was cheered; and, worse than that, the minister of the place smiled at the fact that he was privileged to preach this terrible doctrine! He swayed in his chair with manifest enjoyment! Merciful God! I mentally exclaimed, what awful insensibility has come over men that they dare even to *think* of such a thing without the deepest anguish? Continue your holy work, dear Sir, and the Lord *will* sustain you. The lie *must* die! ELEEO.

THE ORIGINAL "APOSTLES' CREED."

DEAR SIR,—The article bearing this title which appeared in the RAINBOW for May, 1879, has been printed separately; and may be had from the writer, W. Laing, 51, Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh. Price 6d. per dozen, or 4s. per 100, post free.

W. L.

LITERATURE.

Pasteur Gaussen on the Intermediate State.

A BOOK of very pleasant reading has lately appeared, entitled *Letters of Thomes Erskine of Linlathen*, edited by Dr. William Hanna. Writing from Switzerland, in 1826, to his cousin Rachel Erskine, Mr. Erskine says: "My friend Gaussen, at Geneva, holds that the spirit is in a state of total insensibility from the instant of death until the instant of the general resurrection. The interval between death and judgment is in this way absolutely annihilated for them. Their last thought in this world will be instantaneously followed by the sound of the last trumpet. Their eye has, just before death, rested on the face of a friend on earth. The eye is closed, and instantaneously opened to behold the Saviour descend from heaven with clouds and great glory. If this be the case (which however I cannot make up my mind to, entirely), when we look on the spectacle of death, it is striking to reflect that our accountable existence is passing during a period which is to the dead absolutely nothing: and that the first thought which will stir the beings to whom these trappings once belonged, and still belong perhaps, is to be a thought excited by the sight of Christ coming in power."

For my own part, I never discovered this opinion in any of Louis Gaussen's writings; and it seems to be contradicted by him when, describing the placidity which marked his mother's death, in 1855, he uses the following language:—"Nous n'avons pas même pu dire le moment précis où son ame bienheureux s'envolait vers son Dieu." But the looseness of expression with which most of us are chargeable, in the adoption of the current religious phraseology in the matter of death, may perhaps explain the apparent inconsistency.

Respecting another point on which his Scottish friend Erskine was very positive, namely, the final

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restoration of all men, there is no evidence in the volume before us that Gaussen thought with him. Nor, indeed, do Mr. Erskine's two biographers, Dr. Hanna and Principal Shairp. The latter adds: "In one thing, however, Mr. Erskine was altogether unlike most of those who hold the tenets of Universalism. No man I ever knew had a deeper feeling of the exceeding evil of sin, and of the divine necessity that sin must always be misery. His universalistic views did not in any way relax his profound sense of God's abhorrence of sin." This, we admit, will be readily subscribed by any one at all acquainted with the holy life of Thomas Erskine. It is a renewed illustration of the fact that the spiritual athlete is not always the spiritual logician. Or, if this should seem to derogate from the laurels which he won in his long controversy with Scottish Calvinism, we may still be permitted to say that sanctity such as his will ever be more attractive than the profoundest biblical scholarship.

J. WAYLEN.

The Reformed Episcopal Church. An Antidote to the Revival of Superstition. By ALFRED S. RICHARDSON, D.D.

EVERY genuine Protestant, both within and without the Church of England, deplores the spread of Ritualism, which is nothing else than Romanism.

Dr. Richardson describes with clearness and force the danger to our common Christianity of this growing superstition, and then gives an interesting account of the rise, progress, and principles of the Reformed Episcopal Church, of which he is a bishop. We do not prophesy, but we think it highly probable, that many devout Christians in the Church of England who like the episcopal form of Church government, but dislike Ritualism, will unite themselves with this Church. We must say, in all candour, that the "Declaration of Principles" gives us entire satisfaction, so far as it goes. This interesting tract may be had of the author, Malvern, Worcestershire.

The Prayer Meeting and its Improvement. By the Rev. LEWIS O. THOMPSON. From the fourth American edition. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

MR. THOMPSON has paid close attention to this subject, and gives the result in twenty-six chapters. Many of his suggestions are practical, but we infer that our American brethren—in some places at least—conduct their prayer-meetings on a different plan from that which prevails in England. We confess that we are not in favour of minute rules on the matter of prayer. The action of the Spirit upon the heart is the best regulator in this holy matter of pouring out our hearts before God. The book, however, is good reading, and some may get hints from it both for thought and action.

NOTICES.

"A. B." asks the meaning of 2 Tim. i. 15, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." The Asia of geographers is the largest of the great divisions of the earth's surface,

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its length 7,500 miles, its breadth more than 5,000 miles; but the Asia of the New Testament was Asia Minor, with Ephesus as its capital. It is to this place that Paul refers, and his statement means that certain professing Christians from that region who *had been* in Rome had forsaken him and gone home. He names two of them, Phygellus and Hermogenes; and his appeal to Timothy is to be brave in contrast to the conduct of these pusillanimous persons.

"JAMES G."—Men lived so long in those days that the great facts of the world's early history would be familiar to them. Noah signifies *rest*. He was the son of Lamech, and father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth; born B.C. 2948, died 1998, aged 950 years. He was the tenth from Adam through Seth, and was born 46 years after the death of Adam, and 14 after that of Seth. He was contemporary with Enos for 16 years, with Terah for 128 years, and with Abram for about 50 years. The Babylonians called him *Xisusthrus*, son of Oliartes; the Chinese, *Yao* or *Fo-Hi*; others Prometheus, Deucalion, Atlas, Theuth, Inachus, Osiris, Dagon, and so forth. Dagon (*fish*), the national god of the Philistines, had the face and hands of a man and the tail of a fish—an obvious symbol of Noah and the flood.

"A READER" may be *sure* that "the sure word of prophecy" will be fulfilled. Be not deceived by spiritualising preachers. Just take one historical instance out of a thousand. In Jer. li. 14, we read this: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn by Himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee." These words were addressed to proud, imperial, "impregnable" Babylon, and the sceptics of that day made merry over the threat. You know how the city was taken. The first time Cyrus marched in procession out of his palace he made a display of his cavalry in the sight of the Babylonians. "There stood first before the gates 4,000 of the guards drawn up, four in front, 2,000 on each side of the gates; when the chariot of Cyrus advanced, 4,000 of the guards led the way before it, and 2,000 attended on each side of it. The staff officers about his person, to the number of about 300, followed. Then were led the horses maintained for Cyrus himself, with their bridles of gold; these were about 200. After these marched 2,000 spearmen; after these the first formed body of horse, 10,000 in number; after these another body of 10,000 Persian horse, led by Hystaspes; after these another body of 10,000, led by Datamas; after these another, led by Gadatas. After these marched the Medean horse; then the Armenian, then the Hyrcanian; then the Caducian, then the Sacian. And after the horse went the chariots, ranged four abreast, led by the Persian Artabates." XEN. *Cyrop.* 1. viii. c. 3.

"L. D."—We feel it a holy privilege to bear witness to the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to teach the true doctrine concerning man's nature, Christ's redemption, the resurrection of His saints at His coming, and their simultaneous glorification then. All this and many other golden truths, in perfect and beautiful harmony therewith, we find in the Book which holy men, under Divine inspiration, have given to us. If you will search for yourself, without touching a commentary, and trying to forget your present opinions, you will find what we have found; and, of course, feel it a duty and a pleasure to

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enrol yourself among the witnesses. We often find that persons who know little or nothing about our doctrines are the quickest to oppose them. We would commend to such persons—if they can appreciate its wisdom and courtesy—the admirable remark a clergyman in Liverpool made to us at the recent Conference in that great city. He said, "Sir, I do not quite understand your doctrines, and therefore, am not qualified to offer an opinion concerning them." Of a man who thinks and speaks in that way, there is more than hope; there is certainty that he will soon stand in the light. But, understand distinctly—and this remark is for all our readers—we do not wish any one to agree with us simply because we teach so and so; we want all men to ask, "*What saith the Scripture?*"

GEORGE A. BROWN, Auckland, from whom we are glad to hear, writes, among other things:—"You will like to hear about the prospect of the work in New Zealand. I never yet saw a greater harvest field. The people are anxious to hear the glorious truth of Conditional Immortality. It would do your heart good to see the crowds that come to hear. . . Your labours have been blessed, dear brother. Wherever we go we find the RAINBOW has spanned the theological heavens, and men have been blessed by its rays. May God long spare you to work, and enable you to keep up the sublime hues of the RAINBOW, that it may be seen as a signal of hope amidst the stormy elements of the theological world. I am glad to hear that efforts are being made to build a new chapel in the great city of London for one whose voice *must be heard*, and whose pen *must be used*, so long as God gives life in the grand Reformation work now going on. Give my Christian love to the Church worshipping at Maberly. I shall never forget the exceeding kindness of your dear flock.'

"I. A. K."—Your difficulties are imaginary. We hardly think you have been an attentive reader of the RAINBOW. 1. The spiritual body is at the resurrection, not at the death. The "is" and the "have," on which you rest, are simply notes of certainty, very common in Scripture. Such a thing *is*—present to faith—because God has determined that it is so to be. 2. Christ died *literally*, or we are not redeemed. The breathing back His spirit, or breath, to the Father was an expression of His faith that He would not be left in the grave. 3. The passage is entirely misunderstood, but it *cannot* teach what you say. 4. The Paradise promised to the penitent robber has no existence yet, nor will it until the Kingdom of Christ is established on the earth, after His return. 5. The answer to the Sadducees teaches just the reverse of what you think. The patriarchs are *dead*, but God means to raise them, therefore they live to Him. On no other principle were the Sadducees answered. 7. Even if you are right respecting Moses and Elias, it proves nothing regarding other men. 8. Read the paper entitled "Regeneration and Resurrection," in this number. 9. The angel did not say anything to suggest that "evidently he had lived on the earth as a prophet, but was then alive in spirit form." What he did say was, "I am a fellow servant of thine *and of thy brethren the prophets*, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." 10. "Spiritual bodies at the moment of death" is a great delusion. Death in that case is not *death*, and resurrection is not needed. We pray you get out of this network of error, and accept the true sayings of God.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

FEBRUARY, 1881.

THE GOSPEL OF RESURRECTION.*

"Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."—Acts xxvi. 19-23.

OUR obligation to the heroic men who fought the battle of faith for us, is very great. The Apostle of the Gentiles has laid the world under an immense debt of gratitude. Of course we owe all, in the first instance, to the grace of God which was the spring and motive of the fearless testimony which this man bore to his ascended Master; but we are not to forget the witness on that account; nay, rather should we pay a tribute of admiring thankfulness to the memory of the faithful servant, whilst we reverently worship his Lord. Men who spoke of Christ in the face of His enemies, and within sight of bonds, imprisonment and death, are not to be forgotten by Christians. In speaking for Him they spoke for us, for all time, and for eternity. The overwhelming sense of their responsibility to heaven and earth crushed out every thought of self. Insult, poverty, persecutions, dungeons, death—what were these to men whom the Son of God had taken into His service? The transcendent honour shed light into the darkest prison and made the headsman's axe flash with the glories of an assured resurrection.

1. The best proof of our admiration of apostolic zeal is to defend and teach the doctrines of the Apostles. And this we should do with at least some appreciable degree of the courage and self-

* A Sermon, by the Editor.

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denial that animated them. It is an easy thing to call churches St. Paul, St. John, St. Luke, and so forth, but the dedication to those honoured names of our places of worship will prove as hollow a sham as the so-called canonization of saints by the Bishop of Rome, if the Divine teachings of these inspired ministers of the Saviour are obscured by the traditions of the dark ages, leavened with the corruptions of a false philosophy, or mingled with the theatrical tinsel of a pagan ritualism. Nor shall we be any nearer the direct line of testimony—which, of course, is the only "apostolic succession"—if we go to the other extreme and make our proud rationalism the final judge of what the Bible should have said. It is absurd to think that Divine truth is in any way connected with a man's clothes; but it is hardly less foolish, whilst it is decidedly more arrogant, to reject the supernatural in doctrine,—confirmed as it is by the miraculous in deed,—at the bidding of a "puffed up fleshly mind" which impudently seats itself upon the throne and dares to dictate to God. True loyalty to the Father worships in spirit and in truth.

If we would be true to the holy Head of the Church, and bear testimony for Him in practical sympathy with His Apostles, we have simply to copy Paul's obedience to "the heavenly vision." Defending himself from the malignant charges of his countrymen, and accounting for his conduct since the ever memorable journey to Damascus, he mentions the fact of his obedience to the Divine call: "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." There is the key to this man's wonderful subsequent life. What more do you want? The secret of his extraordinary labours and endurance is comprised in these few words. The servant attends to the words of his master. The soldier obeys the command of his general. The will of Christ is henceforth the law of life to this Jew of Tarsus. The fierce persecutor, panting with rage against the followers of the Nazarene, is suddenly checked by a Hand he sees not, and a "Voice"—clear, impressive, searching, and yet wonderfully tender, as if its very majesty sprang from mercy—speaks to him. The will of the proud Pharisee is slain on the field of Damascus, the letters of the high priest, authorising persecution, are so much waste paper, and a new chapter in the history of the Church and the world begins: a chapter which, in its results, is not finished yet, but will stretch out its marvellous sequel until it mingles with the splendours of the new creation in which God will be all in all.

Can *we* bear the test under notice? Is immediate submission to Divine authority one of the facts of our history? Have we been obedient to the heavenly vision? We have all had it, not indeed in the miraculous splendour which made "the sun ashamed," when the Lord of glory came from behind the veil for a moment, but in thoughts, impressions, feelings from the Word, heard or read, which could have been produced only by the Holy Spirit; in the

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starting and quivering of conscience, when the shame and guilt of sin came out in lurid light; or when memory recalled gracious privileges neglected, resolutions broken, time wasted, folly committed, and Christ forgotten. But more than this: whatever may be true in relation to the mental history of each of us, we are all interested in the fact which Paul named to Agrippa as the explanation of his conduct; for Paul is *our* Apostle. He was arrested, converted, enlightened, commissioned for *us*. He was divinely constituted the Apostle of the nations. The fierce Jewish zealot is transformed into the fervent messenger of salvation to the Gentiles. And we shall neither understand the man nor his message if we do not accept both from the glorified Saviour with that deep gratitude which finds its best and only convincing proof of reality in "obedience to the heavenly vision."

But there was a "Voice" as well as a vision. Have we not all heard it? It is so tender, "Come!" It is so loving, "Come unto *Me!*" It is so beneficent, "And I will give you *rest!*" And it will be so dreadful if redeeming grace and love are impiously rejected, when it concentrates its indignation in the awful word—"Depart!"

2. The harmony of inspired teaching under different dispensations, is affirmed by the Apostle. Divine purposes announced in the earlier writings find expansion and development in the later; but contradiction between the testimony of Moses and the prophets, and that of Christ and the Apostles, there is not and cannot be. The reception of Jesus of Nazareth by Saul of Tarsus, as the Messiah promised to His nation by its prophets, was simply an act of religious consistency and of loyalty to the God of his fathers. The Jew who becomes a Christian, so far from being an apostate from Moses, actually adopts the counsel of the great lawgiver. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him" (Deut. xviii. 15-19).

In many an eloquent passage in Paul's speeches and letters this harmony is exhibited, with a clearness of proof that nothing but perverse Jewish blindness can resist. One of the many remarkable sayings of our Lord, by which He made the guilt of the nation in rejecting Him without excuse, was this: "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me" (John v. 46).

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And so, on that most memorable evening of the journey to Emmaus, the incidents of which are described with wonderful pathos by Luke, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets," the risen Lord expounded to His rapt listeners "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." And shortly afterwards, appearing "in the midst of the eleven and them that were with them," we find this momentous record:—"And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 27, 44-49).

From the fall to the era of the restitution, from the promise in Eden to the vision of the new heavens and earth, from the irruption of moral evil into our world down to the time of its everlasting expulsion from the universe, attention is directed constantly to a PERSON—the glorious Christ of God. There is vast variety in the historical and prophetic incidents, but they all cluster around this blessed One, of whom Paul said nothing at variance with the accepted writings of Moses and the prophets. To Him give all the prophets witness; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

3. The resurrection of Christ from the dead is the supreme fact of the Gospel. The verification of this alleged fact by competent witnesses is of the utmost importance. We must have the testimony of men who saw HIM alive after the spear had pierced His heart, and His death and burial had been officially attested. It is common enough to say in pulpits and books that Christ's soul was alive in heaven during the time that His dead body lay in the tomb; that the souls of believers go to Him when they—that is their bodies—die—"the death of the body" is the current and deceptive expression—and that these souls of believers are glorified and crowned in heaven now, many of them being so glorified and crowned, of course, for ages. I have many objections to these statements, the enumeration of which would prove that they are absolutely ruinous to the whole scheme of grace. I could easily show that if they are true, there is no accepted sacrifice, no bearing of the curse for us, no putting away sin, no atonement, no justification of the believer, and no eternal life for any of the sons of men! But instead of detail, let one comprehensive objection to these popular notions suffice—*they are all contrary to Scripture.* There is no Divine truth in any of them. The man who undertakes to

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prove their harmony with the Word of God will find his task as laborious and fruitless as that of Sisyphus.

No Christian assembly needs to be reminded—that is to say, if it has not been led astray by erroneous teaching about the immortality of human souls and glorification at death,—that the resurrection of the Redeemer from the dead—the *anastasis*, the standing or rising up—is absolutely essential to prove that He *is* the Redeemer. If there be a link deficient in the chain of evidence in this essential matter, everything is deficient. The holy life, and wonderful works, and extraordinary teaching of Jesus are unprecedented phenomena in the history of the world; but if He was not restored to life, or did not rise, or was not raised from the dead,—it matters not here whether you view it in the active or passive form—we are yet in our sins, they who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished, the Apostles are false witnesses, and the whole thing is an elaborate, complicated, and astonishing imposture! This unspeakably important matter must be looked at with all solemnity and earnestness. If Jesus, the entire personality, did not actually die, if He did not really "pour out His soul unto death," if there was a part of Him, a part of the man Christ Jesus, alive in heaven during the time that the Holy One lay in the tomb of Joseph, then it cannot be said, with strict attention to the meaning of words, that "*He* rose from the dead." But if He did not rise, and the disciples were deceived by a phantom of their over-heated imagination, as we have been told by some who wish to be considered teachers, "though they understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," then the entire doctrine of redemption is baseless and the Bible loses its radiant crown of prophetic and historical glory.

I purposely stop here, having said enough to indicate the disastrous consequences logically involved in the notion, on the one hand, of some of Christ's friends that He was alive when He was dead, and in the notion, on the other hand, of some of His enemies, that He is dead when He is alive. Let us now hear the deliverance of the Apostle on this great matter:—"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James: then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. . . . Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because

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we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

This is satisfactory, authoritative, divine. There is a tone about direct revelation which vouches for its genuineness, like the fragrance borne on the breeze from "Araby the blest." Faith rests when inspiration speaks, and inspiration speaks that faith may rest. It is God's will that believers should have perfect peace, and not be tossed about on a restless sea of uncertainty concerning matters of the very first importance which, from their very nature, can only be made known through Divine revelation. "Christ is risen from the dead." Sublime assurance! "Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." Note three points in this glorious revelation: (1.) the wavesheaf (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11) involves and consecrates the harvest; (2) they that sleep in Christ shall rise from the dead; (3) their resurrection takes place at Christ's coming—*parousia*, presence; so that there will be no resurrection, and consequently no glorification of the saints until He who is the Resurrection and the Life returns to raise them.

According to our text Paul told Agrippa that Christ should be the first (*protos*) to rise from the dead. But a first implies others. Here, again, is the glorious fact that He rose from the dead, not for Himself alone, but as the Head and Representative of many sons who are to be raised and glorified at His coming. He is the first begotten of the dead, and His people are begotten again unto a living hope by His resurrection. What a prospect! An assured and eternal victory over death and the grave, by resurrection, and that wonderful event the result of union with Him, who says in words of majestic sublimity: "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hades and of death." The song of Moses after the miraculous passage of the Red Sea is jubilant and spirit-stirring, and we quite enter into the spirit of the scene when Miriam and her sisters danced with irrepressible joy. It was a holy dance, like that of David, long afterward, when the

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ark of God was delivered from heathen captivity. But what will it be when a multitude numerous as the dewdrops of the morning, with the holy beauty of eternal youth upon them, shall sing the song of the Lamb? We may not enter now on this inviting theme. Another opportunity may be granted. Meantime, here is a joyous trumpet blast:—"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory!" *This* is the gospel of resurrection!

JOB'S FAITH IN A FUTURE LIFE.

THE question of the faith of Job in a future life has been lately discussed in the pages of the RAINBOW. The conclusion arrived at by the writer of the first paper is, that Job had no faith or hope whatever in any future life of any kind, but that he contemplated, with the deepest sorrow, death as putting an end for ever to his, and every man's existence. As the question is a very important one, I am sure that the readers of the RAINBOW will not be displeased at my giving my view of it. I have long come to a conclusion opposite to that of Mr. Phillips. It is, that Job had a firm faith in a future life, to which the resurrection from the dead was to introduce him.

It strikes me that it would be a very extraordinary thing indeed, and scarcely compatible with human nature and the general teaching of Scripture, that Job *could* live such a life as he lived before God, not only in his prosperity but in his adversity, without a faith in a future life for himself. Job was one of the very greatest of the ancient saints. He ranked in God's mind as equal with Noah and Daniel (Ezek. xiv. 14). Both of these men were undoubtedly sustained in their life by the hope and the faith of immortality. It would seem impossible for human nature to live their godly life without such a faith. Certainly if Job lived his life of love for God, and faith in Him, and obedience to Him, all the while believing that death would terminate his existence for ever, he would present to view the specimen of a man nowhere else to be met with in or out of Scripture Biography.

But in addition to this consideration, it appears to me to be the indubitable testimony of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews that every one of the faithful men of the Old Testament had faith in the doctrine of a future life through resurrection. I do not know how we can carefully read the 11th chapter of this book without seeing this. Let us mark that it is of a future life in *connection with resurrection* that the writer speaks (ver. 35). Those of whom he spoke did not, he tells us, obtain what they hoped for *in death* (vers. 13, 39). The better heavenly country

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which they desired lay, in all their estimation, *beyond*, not *during*, *death*. But to this better country they, one and all of them, looked on in faith (vers. 13-16).

Now, can we believe for a moment that all those of whom this chapter speaks, had faith in a resurrection and that Job knew nothing about it, and had no faith in it whatsoever? Those who lived before his time had faith in it, as Abel, Enoch, Noah (verses 4, 5, 7). Noah, who gave its tone to the theology of the world after the flood, was a believer in it. Those who lived at periods probably embracing, or nearly so, the lifetime of Job, had faith in it, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses (vers. 8, 21, 22, 24). The saints who came after these all believed in resurrection (ver. 39). Those who are named in this chapter are confessedly but samples of others, too numerous to be mentioned (ver. 32); and can we suppose that all of these held the glorious faith of resurrection, and that Job alone of the ancient faithful did not?

But we go much farther than an inference from this chapter. The 6th verse tells us that, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." Now, what is the faith which is here declared to be essential? It embraces two great dogmas. The first is faith in the personal existence of God; the second is faith in Him as the rewarder of all who seek Him. Now, where does this chapter tell us that the reward is given to believers? Not in this life to so much as a single one of them. Some of them, as Abraham and Moses, had as great a share as Job had, in what is called worldly prosperity. Others of them partook largely of the most terrible calamities of life. But neither to one or other of these classes was the reward they looked for given in this present life (ver. 13). But without faith in such a reward as was promised, i.e., faith in a future life, we are told that it is impossible to please God, and we therefore conclude that Job, who pleased God, had such a faith as well as Abel, or Noah, or Abraham, or Moses. Let us now turn to Job's own testimony in his book.

There are two things which Mr. Phillips concedes to have existed in Job's mind on this question of resurrection. The first is, that Job had the idea of it in his mind; the second is, that he longed for it very much (RAINBOW, p. 522). Now, where did Job get his idea of resurrection? Whence could he possibly get it? Resurrection is not an idea of natural conception. In Nature, that which dies does not rise again. The history of religion, as known to us, is the history of the *dying out of the idea*. It is possible that the Egyptians in the embalming of their dead intimated the retention of this idea from older times (Gibbon, v. 411). It is very probable that the original idea of resurrection merged into the much more accepted view of the immortality of the soul, which obliterated the idea from whence it sprung. (H. Hody, D.D., "The Resurrection of the Body," p. 11). But certain it is that the idea of resurrection is not an idea of natural growth, that it has

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a perpetual tendency to die out of human conception: that there is but one Book (I make nothing of the Koran of Mahommed, for it is but a copy of the Biblical view, where correct) of religion, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, where this idea is brought forward, sustained, and developed to its fulness. Whence, then, I ask, did Job get this idea, which undoubtedly was a prominent one in his mind whenever he thought of death? It must have been from tradition from his fathers! And could he have thus received it without also receiving somewhat more of the original tradition, viz., that it was not merely a conception of the mind, but also a verity which should be accomplished in God's dealings with His people?

Let us now turn to the two passages in his book where Job unquestionably speaks of resurrection, and of the aspect of his own mind to the wondrous conception. We will first turn our thoughts to what he tells us of it in chap. xix. 23-27. Following Mr. Phillips' example, I will give a translation of verses 25-27, which appears to me to be the closest to the original Hebrew. "I know my Redeemer, Living and Last. He shall stand over the dust. And after they have destroyed my skin this shall be, namely, in my flesh I shall see God. Whom I shall see for me, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. My reins are consumed in my bosom." I will just make a few observations upon particular words in these verses before I proceed to show what is their general sense.

I have no doubt that "Redeemer" is the best translation for the Hebrew word "*gouail*" in verse 25. Fürst, whose authority as a Hebrew scholar ranks in the foremost place, gives as its primary sense, "to free, to redeem, as the life of condemned persons, to redeem captives from slavery, to claim them for freedom." With Fürst Gesenius agrees. There are no higher authorities in the Hebrew language than these. If our readers will turn to the following references, they will find examples of the senses in which this word is used in Scripture, and especially in the earlier Scriptures. It is constantly used for one who pays the price of land sold by a poor brother and gives it back to him, and which transaction is called the "redemption of the land" (Lev. xxv. 25-27). It is frequently used for God's deliverance of His people Israel from captivity (Exod xv. 13; vi. 6; Psalm cvii. 2). It is used also for God's deliverance of individual believers from evil of every kind (Gen. xlviii. 16; Psalm cxix. 154; Isa. xlvii. 4; lxiii. 16). It is also used for God's deliverance of His people from the grave by their resurrection (Hos. xiii. 7). "Redeemer" then would appear to be the very best translation for this word in Job xix. 25, where Job evidently looks to the person spoken of as the object of his hope and trust.

With Mr. Phillips, I prefer the "Last" as the translation of the Hebrew word "*akharoun*" in ver. 25, and think it applied rather

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to the person spoken of as "Redeemer" than to the time when He should stand over the dust. The Hebrew is equally capable, I believe, of both senses.

I differ from Mr. Phillips in preferring the authorised version "*in* my flesh" to his proposed emendation, "*without* my flesh." The Hebrew prefix *mi* is equally capable of both translations, and it depends altogether on the general sense of a passage which translation is to be chosen. Mr. Phillips's translation "without" is altogether inadmissible, as I will now proceed to show.

There is no doubt that in the passage before us, Job expresses his full and confident faith that he will see God at some time or other. No one, I believe, disputes this. Mr. Phillips does not dispute it, but holds it, and therefore I need say no more upon this all-important point. Job, in misery, hating life since it was now only a burden, expresses his certain faith that at some future time he himself with his own eyes should behold God, and that this sight of God should be a blessing and a benefit to him. So far as this goes, there is here no dispute.

Now, when did Job expect to see God with that clear view that he speaks of here? Certainly not in this life. He tells us that it was after his skin was destroyed that he expected it, and therefore, he does not refer to any clearing up of his doubts which he might have in this life, such as he speaks of in ch. xlii. 4-6. He looks forward to some other state and some other life beyond this present state and life as that in which his eyes should look upon God, and he should receive blessing from the glorious sight.

Now, there are hence but two states during which he could possibly have looked for this sight of God. The one was the state of death, of which he had a clear and defined idea. The other was the state of resurrection, of which he also had a definite idea. Which of these are we to suppose was in his mind?

Certainly not the state of death. He has described that state too often and too minutely to allow us to suppose any such idea to have been in his mind (chap. xiv. 13-22). With Job, death was, while it should last, the end of life, whether that life was one of prosperity or woe. It was a deep, quiet sleep, undisturbed by sorrow or by joy. The almost infinite varieties of this life were there brought to one common level. But as Mr. Phillips fully admits this, I need say nothing further upon it (RAINBOW, p. 521).

But when this is disposed of, there only remains the conclusion that Job looked to see God in and through resurrection; and, since he was confident that he should see God, he was equally confident of that resurrection in which he was to see Him. Of his sight of God he had no doubt. He did not look for it in this life. He did not look for it during death. He therefore looked for it in that bodily resurrection of which he certainly had the conception. And what is there incredible or improbable in such a supposition? If Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses believed in this resurrection, why

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should not Job? He lived a life of holy obedience and trust in God which could only be based on such a belief. Everything might go against him here. The trouble which had descended upon him with its fearful weight might continue to the close of life. A terrible death might close the life of the patient and the upright man! Yet still Job would "trust" in God (chap. xiii. 15). We may surely then, without doubt, take the passage that is so familiar to all our ears, especially when we mourn for our dead, as expressive of the old patriarchal faith of Job, that there would be a resurrection from the dead. He believed in his Redeemer, the seed of Eve, and yet the ever living, the First and the Last, who should at a coming time stand over the dust of His sleeping ones; and lo, the sleepers should hear His voice, and feel the influence of His Almighty Spirit, and wake up and look upon the God of their redemption.

We now turn to the 14th chapter of Job, to which the patriarch's utterances in chap. xix. 25-28 give us, where we require it, the key. Of the translation of this chapter, as given us in our authorised version, we do not require to make any observation except that, with Mr. Phillips, we prefer "warfare" as the translation to "appointed time" in ver. 14.

In the opening verses of this chapter Job speaks of the brevity of human life. When he comes to vers. 7-12, he compares together the cutting down of a tree by the axe of the woodman with the cutting down of human life by the scythe of death. There is hope of the growth of the tree again by a natural process; there is no hope of the continuance of life to the dead man by any or by all the processes of nature.

Let us remember that in this comparison of the tree and man, while there is an external resemblance there is an internal and essential difference. The cut down tree is, to all appearance, dead. It has no bough, no leaf. All that appears of it is the stock, and it decays and rots, and dies into the ground. But though all this happened, and though the root was old, there was yet in it a principle of life which moisture and heat would encourage and give strength to, so that it should once more send forth boughs like a plant.

But not so when man was cut down by the stroke of death. He was not more apparently dead than was the tree, but he was really more so. In him there remained no latent principle of life which might, if cherished, return to the exercises of the old existence again. No medicine could heal the deadly wound. No skill of science could restore the life. No powers of nature could draw forth a power which had gone finally away.

But was there, therefore, no hope for man in death? There was. Job looks on to a far distant time; the consummation of all things, when the heavens should be no more. It was distant; he knew not how far. It was to human thought a very, very distant thing.

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Earthly kingdom after kingdom was to rise, flourish, and decay. Dispensation after dispensation of Divine dealings with man was to elapse. Long centuries—tens of centuries—of struggle, and care, and sin, and suffering, were to pass over this weary earth. But—at the end of all this—man was to awake and leave his "long home" of the grave, and be raised out of his sleep!

And then comes the solemn question of ver. 15, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

It is quite plain that this is a question to which two very different replies can be made, according to the belief of the person who is inquired of. The Christian would say, Yes; he shall live again when Christ comes to raise him from the dead. The Epicurean and the Sadducee would say, with a sneer or with a sigh, No; man shall never live again after that he has once passed under the dominion of death. Which of these replies, we are to ask, would Job give?

There are two means of finding this out. If we knew his faith from other passages we could tell. Now, we have already ascertained this from chap. xix. 25-27, and cannot, therefore, hesitate to say that Job would give the Christian, not the Epicurean reply. But we can also refer to the context of this 15th verse as affording us clear and full proof that such would be his reply. He does not *say* "Yes," but he conveys the affirmative reply beyond a doubt.

I suppose every one will allow that if Job meant to convey his idea that, if a man died he would never live again, that if he made any reflections on this sad end of man they would be those of a hopeless sorrow and despair. We suppose that every one will allow that if words of patient hope occur in connection with this question, they indicate beyond a doubt that Job had faith in the doctrine of the resurrection of man to his second life.

Now let our readers look at the expressions which immediately follow the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" They are these: "All the days of my appointed time (or warfare) will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thy hands."

Are these the words of sorrow and despair, or of joy and patient hope? If Job believed that when a man died he should never live again, his words would be those of a sad despairing man. But they are words of hope and faith in connection with death based on God's love for him, and God's power to do for him what man and nature could not possibly effect. With the hope of the "change" before him, he will wait all the days of his warfare, hard and terrible as it was; he will not "curse God and die." His glorious faith is based upon the only power which could give him his ardent wish—the power of God speaking with the voice which the dead shall hear. He knew God loved him. He knew God had a desire to him as the work of His hands. He, therefore, would reply to—

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"If a man die, shall he live again?"—"Yes, I know my Redeemer, the Living and the Last. He shall stand over my dust. He shall speak, and I will answer Him by coming forth to His call and praising Him throughout eternity." As the Psalmist would reply to his question, "Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?"—Yes, they certainly shall; so Job would reply to his question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"—Yes, he shall live when God shall call him out of his grave. This glorious faith it was which was at the base of Job's patience when every earthly comfort was withdrawn from him, and he saw no prospect of their return. This faith nerved Paul to fight his good fight; it nerved Job also to the warfare of a good soldier of his loving God (2 Cor. iv. 18; 2 Tim. iii. 7, 8).

I will now just say a few words in reply to two objections of Mr. Phillips, against the idea that Job believed in a future life.

He tells us then, in the first place, that passages such as chap. vii. 9, x. 21, xvi. 22, are absolutely inconsistent with the belief of Job in any future life. Our readers will examine these. We will quote but one:—"When a few years are come, then I shall go *the way whence I shall not return.*"

I think I have already explained this in my observations on chap. xiv. 7-10. They convey no more than this, that to recall the human life which has departed, is beyond all nature and beyond all human skill. Perhaps the use of similar language from one who was a great master of language will show best what I mean, and justify what I say. I believe the verse which I have quoted from (chap. xvi. 22), is the source from whence Shakespeare derived one of his most frequently quoted passages. How does he describe the state of death? He calls it—

> "The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
> No traveller returns."—*Hamlet*, A. iii. S. i.

This is just as strong a passage as any of those which occur in Job, and yet Shakespeare, we know, was a believer in resurrection.

There is another objection, of a different kind, which Mr. Phillips makes to the idea that Job was a believer in a future life. He thinks that if Job had had such a faith, he would have had no difficulty in explaining those dealings of God with him which perplexed him and his friends so much; a belief in a future life would have solved them all, when "what is crooked shall be made straight" (RAINBOW, p. 523). It is sufficient to reply to this that men who have undoubtedly a faith in a future life have experienced the very same difficulties which Job did. They, too, are perplexed, astonished at, know not how to explain the ways of God here with His people. I suppose all will allow that the prophet Habakkuk believed in the resurrection from the dead. He was an inspired man, and lived after Isaiah and Hosea had uttered those plain predictions which enabled Martha to express her clear belief in the

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grand doctrine (John xi. 24). Yet Habakkuk was astonished at the way in which God looked upon the troubles of His people. "How long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear? even cry out unto Thee of violence, and Thou wilt not save? Wherefore lookest Thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest Thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" (chap. i. 2, 13.) If Habakkuk spake thus, with all his belief in resurrection, so surely may Job have done so.

We hope that we have vindicated the old and generally received view that the patriarch Job was a believer in a future life. We may still read his famous passage in chap. xix. 25-27, and believe that it enunciates the same grand doctrine which St. Paul enlarges on in 1 Cor. xv. Resurrection was the primitive faith of man. Job expressed his wish that his faith in it were "graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever" (chap. xix. 24). It may be that inscriptions to this effect now found on marble in a fortress on the coast of Hadramaut, in the vicinity of Aden, in Arabia, may have come down to us from an antiquity almost as great as the age of the patriarch. Part of those inscriptions, believed to be of great antiquity by their learned commentator, are thus translated:—"They sanctioned for us from the religion of Hud (Heber) right laws; and we believed in miracles, the resurrection, and the resuscitation of the dead by the breath of God." ("Historical Geography of Arabia," by Rev. Charles Forster, B.D., vol. 2, p. 90). Our readers may consult this book in the Guildhall Library.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

DOCTRINES INVOLVED.

SUBJECTS for consideration which appear to be involved in the Doctrine of the Eternal Punishment of impenitent sinners in the torments of hell.

1st. There are now and there will be confined from the day of their death throughout all eternity in suffering by far the greater portion of the human race; as those known to be godly in any degree or form of religion (though spoken of as "a great multitude, which no man could number") have always been by very far the smallest portion of mankind.

2nd. That those so confined will include all ages (except those in infancy) and all grades of character, from the most cruel debased profligates, to those who by reason of juvenile age or imperfect education were comparatively innocent, their chief sin being not actual ill-doing, but the neglect of the love and service of God.

3rd. That many of the latter class will be those young people and others who did not love and serve God, chiefly because they

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were never taught to do so; and it was the lot of others who had the advantage of education to listen to teachers of error, under whom they were placed, and whom they were bound to listen to; and who appeared to them to have as much or more authority for their teaching as those of a contrary nature.

4th. That all these, being the children of fallen Adam, came into the world with a nature having a bias or proneness to evil.

5th. That all these so confined, being from the nature and circumstance of their miserable condition quite incapable of providing for the maintenance of their existence (as when on earth), are and will be kept alive and capable of enduring their punishment by the miraculous power of God in order that their misery and guilt may be perpetuated.

6th. That all these being impenitent sinners in terrible sufferings would riot in blasphemy and sin to the utmost of their power and opportunity.

7th. That Satan, whose aim it has been from the first to mar or destroy the work of God in the history of the human race, would have ample cause for triumph in his great success.

8th. That the Divine Being, though a God of Love, a God of truth, and without iniquity, would regard all this horrible misery and sin with satisfaction and complacency.

9th. That, although God has declared in His Word that "He retaineth *not His anger for ever*, because He delighteth in mercy" (Ps. ciii. 9; Isa. lvii. 16; Jer. iii. 5; Micah vii. 18, 19), yet He will thus be false to Himself and to His Word by continuing His anger against all these.

10th. That the doctrine of the eternal punishment of impenitent sinners in the torments of hell involving these serious points is found to rest not upon clear explicit declarations of the Divine will and purpose, but upon passages in the Old Testament which are poetical and metaphorical, and in the New of like nature as parables and symbols.

11th. That these poetical, metaphorical, parabolical, and symbolical texts require to be authoritatively explained by those which are clear and explicit on the subject, of which there are none to sustain the doctrine. W. W.

THE ABOLITION OF SIN.

"Now once in the end of the Age hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—HEB. ix. 26-28.

I. "BY one man sin came into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." The

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appointment of death unto men once, is because of their inheritance of the sinful nature of the "one man." This is evidenced by the statement that "death has reigned" over irresponsible children and others "who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," i.e., by an act of volition. This primary death, therefore, cannot be penal, since men are not accountable for the possession of the Adam nature. Death once is a just deprivation of original life (Gen. iii. 22, 23), not extinction, or there would be no resurrection of "the unjust" to judgment, for which they are "reserved" in the grave (2 Peter ii. 9; Rev. xx. 12, 13). They are, however, accountable for the "*deeds done in the body*," the evil acts wilfully performed from the promptings of the sinful nature (Rev. xx. 13). Hence, "after this" first death comes the *judicial* sentence of death the second time, or God's inflexible refusal to confer a second or eternal life upon such as have given undeniable proof of the worthless and trustless nature of the life at first bestowed, but now withdrawn for ever (Acts xiii. 46).

According to John xvii. 3, the Divine object in the gift of the varied faculties of the eternal life, is to enable the possessor to estimate at its sublimest value, as well as to enjoy supremely, the moral perfections and creative glories, ways, and acts of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. To realise that which under no other circumstances can be realised. "Canst thou," said his friend to Job, "find out the Almighty to perfection?" "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33–36; 1 Cor. ii. 9; Job xxxvii. 23; xi. 7, 8). In the beginning, the way to the knowledge of God lay in "the tree of life;" but man deliberately plucked the fatal tree which perverted that knowledge, and presented him with "the knowledge of good and evil;" good, which the corrupted state of nature forbade him to enjoy; and evil, from which he had no power to flee! In the end, the tree of judgment will have vanished for ever, whilst in the gift of life, with the privilege of its eternal prolongation by means of "the tree of life" transplanted into "the midst of the street" of the New Jerusalem, man will possess the ever-increasing capacity for the appreciation and comprehension unto perfection of Omnipotence and Omniscience!

II. The word "judgment" does not always necessarily carry with it the idea of the infliction of suffering. This is apparent from the fact that believers in Christ will be called up for "judgment," that the unquestionable opinion of the Head of the Body may be expressed on the character of their conduct and works as servants. They are also to hear, before the same tribunal, His judicial decision of their absolute and *manifest* justification in the presence of assembled witnesses.* The word, as used in the passage under

* See my work on "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," chap. viii. p. 233-238.

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review (Heb. ix. 27), is the righteous decision of One who cannot err, in reference to certain "things" that will be found "written in the Books," about "works" performed *during a lifetime*, the true nature of which will be naked and open before Him. The penalty will be the proceed of the judgment.

III. We are enabled to understand the effect of the judgment from what is said in verse 26, viz., that Christ appeared at the period of the consummation of the ages appointed for the probationary attainment of acceptable righteousness (Gal. iii. 21–24), for the express purpose of settling once for all the question of sin, that had brought ruin into the world. He came personally to decide the doom of SIN in the aggregate; and His decision was inflexibly righteous; He came to the determination of exterminating it judicially "by the sacrifice of Himself." "For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and FOR SIN, judged SIN in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). The result of man's life of liability under law, and the several dispensations previous to the first advent of Christ, was, that sin had reigned to his utter condemnation, "all the world was proved guilty before God." Subsequently, the crowning of its condemnation was the rejection and murder of the Son of God! Howbeit, through the love of God (John iii. 16, 17) and the riches of grace, the eternal counsels were in this very deed fulfilled. The Cross of Christ became the revelation of God for the putting away,* abolishing SIN: SIN was thereon righteously judged and condemned (Rom. viii. 3). And let it be remembered, that this is not recorded as an arbitrary act of power, but a work of the purest judicial righteousness; owing, I presume, to the Divine permission having been accorded to Satan to exercise a tentative influence over the Adam. It is "through death" that He will in due time utterly "destroy" both "the devil" and his "works," sin and death (Heb. ii. 14; 1 John iii. 8). In the totality, therefore, the root (sin) and branch (sinners) will be blotted out of the creation (Mal. iv. 1).

IV. The fulness of the work is not yet apparent. *To faith*, nevertheless, the result is already realised, though it has yet to become a *manifest* consummation "at the (second) Appearance and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. iv. 1). Ver. 28. "Unto them that look for Him," and "love His appearing," whether it be the Church in this age (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), or Israel and the Patriarchs in the age to come, Christ "shall appear the second time, without," or apart from the question of a sin-offering. As we have already seen (§ iii.), in reference to our ver. 26, He hath once appeared for the judgment of sin, and its condemnation to abolition; His Second Appearance will be for *the execution* of the

* ἀθέτησις—abolishing (Parkhurst). Abolish. To annihilate, annul. (Webster).

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sentence, to which the Cross has already testified, and the assize and action of the Great White Throne will consummate! (Rev. xx. 12-15).

Then, as our 28th verse tells us, cometh also the consummation of "SALVATION!" Listen—"I saw a new firmament and a new earth; for the first firmament and the first earth were passed away," with which Sin was associated; "and I heard a voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold! the Tabernacle of God is with men (glorified), and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and GOD HIMSELF shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be NO MORE DEATH, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be ANY MORE PAIN; FOR the former things," to which SIN had given birth, "HAVE PASSED AWAY!" "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out; for of Him, and by Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen!"

V. The above I believe to be the instruction conveyed in the three verses at the head of this paper. If so, then the believer in the duration of sinners under an eternal infliction of punishment for gratuitously suggested endless sins, may here be asked, whether—apart from all other arguments on the subject—IF Sin, having fulfilled the Divine purpose for which its entrance into the world was permitted, be "PUT AWAY" in the judicial manner above described, it is within the possibility of the most tenacious credulity to maintain its ground? Sin, in the persons of sinners thus unwarrantably pre-arraigned, is surely not exceptional! If sin, in the persons of sinners sentenced to the lake of fire from before the Great White Throne, is not extinguished, then *Christ has died in vain!* He will not have fulfilled the purpose for which He "once appeared" (ver. 26). Moreover, if such be the case, the 15th verse of the second chapter of Colossians *is not true!*

Reading. H. GOODWYN.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

CHAPTER II.

COVENANT PROPOSALS; THE LAND PROMISED; THE LAND SHOWN.

PROBABILITY points to some most interesting conclusions as to the relation of Terah to the Divine call of his son Abram to migrate to the land of Canaan. Those conclusions are: first, that the call of the son by "the GOD OF GLORY" roused the conscience of his father to renounce the sin of idolatry in which he had been involved (Joshua xxiv. 15) and fired him with sufficient enthusiasm

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to place him at the head of the exodus from Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis xi. 31); then, further, that the advanced years and failing health of Terah arrested the pilgrimage when it had gone no further than Haran, a comparatively short distance from Ur, Abram being graciously permitted to tarry at this halting place, until at length he had performed the last ministrations of love for his father; and, finally, that the Divine summons first given to Abram in Ur was then repeated to him in Haran, and was at once carried into complete execution. This view, for which the writer is indebted to Murphy's able commentary on Genesis, seems admirably to suit all the indications preserved; and if accepted raises in the mind very grateful feelings, consisting on the one hand of admiration for the filial devotion of a son who was willing to follow a father whom he was nevertheless qualified to lead, and unwilling to leave him behind so long as he could hope to see him resume the journey; on the other hand of delighted satisfaction with the forbearance of Abram's Divine Guide, who does not under the circumstances insist upon the complete overt act of obedience when He sees that the hearts of all concerned are directed to the keeping of His commands. The stern word stands, "Out of the house of thy father;" but the gentle providence adds in most sympathetic undertone, "Unless indeed the house will come too." At length, however, after a delay of about five years, the time of forbearance closes; and the call of God is again heard. We thus reach the first Scripture passage which requires detailed examination.

Genesis xii. 1–3.

"(1) So Yehweh says unto Abram:
Come thou out of thy land,
And out of the place of thy birth,
And out of the house of thy father,
Into the land which I will show thee;
(2) That I may make thee into a great nation,
And bless thee,
And make great thy name,
And become thou a blessing;
(3) That I may bless them that bless thee,
But him that makes light of thee will I curse:
Thus shall be blessed in thee all the families of
the ground." *

* Critical Notes.—Come] Or "Go:" the Hebrew word means either; but as God would accompany His servant, "Come" seems the happier rendering. That I may] Weak *waw* with the *voluntative:* a form used "in order to express the design or purpose of a preceding act" (Driver, "Uses of the Tenses in Hebrew," p. 66); "presents the will and purpose to attain something as the sequence or design of a presupposition, answering to our *in order that*, the Latin *ut* with the conjunctive" (Ewald, "Introductory Hebrew Grammar," 1870, p. 167). And become thou]

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We have here already the substance of the Divine covenant with Abraham thrown into the form of covenant proposals. Yehweh and Abram come together. The Divine Proposer sets before His servant the gracious stipulations which He would have him accept; first naming the one condition which Abram must fulfil, "Come," etc.; then tracing in a few comprehensive words the intermediate blessings which shall follow obedience; and finally bringing into view the ultimate good to the whole human race which shall thus be secured. The command is only one, and is as much an invitation as a command. The intermediate promises are several, and they are most comprehensive and attractive, appealing to some of the strongest motives which can actuate a human heart. The crowning prediction bounds away to the utmost circumference of the family of man, and directs its persuasive force to the largest benevolence and deepest religiousness to which the heart of a good man is accessible. With what design then were these proposals laid before Abram? For one, and one only—to induce his consent, to prevail on him to "come."

He did come. He started for Canaan, and in Canaan he arrived. And when he arrived, what, we may ask, was his position? He was virtually in covenant with God. He had consented to the Divine proposals. He had fulfilled the one condition so far laid upon him. The blessings promised were his by Divine agreement. He must have understood his position to be that of a man virtually in covenant with that glorious and gracious Being whom he had already learned to love, honour, and obey.

It is true there had been, so far, no sacrificial covenanting rites, that we know of; no solemnising oath sworn; no memorial institution set up. But then, on the other hand, we have no grounds for supposing that Abram had at that time any idea of the more formal and solemn covenanting ceremonies which would afterwards be vouchsafed. In fact, he, at that early period, little knew how long his faith would be tried, and how welcome therefore those further confirmations would be. We repeat, therefore, that, having regard to that mutual and deliberate *agreement* which is the very essence of all covenanting, Abram must have felt and known that his

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Aptly termed by Ewald, "a *progressive imperative:*" God's purpose is addressed to Abram's will; and thus voluntary fellowship with God in blessing the world is the goal set before Abram. Thus shall be blessed] "The relatively progressive perfect" (Ewald): "calls attention to the fact that if the antecedent be realised, in that case (ו = *then, so*) the following event, which is viewed as its necessary consequence, will inevitably attain to completeness" (Ball, "Merchant Taylors' Hebrew Grammar," p. 147). The ground] In manifest allusion to the curse, Gen. iii. 17.—The symmetry of this whole passage is very striking: first, a *call*, combining the authority of a command with the graciousness of an invitation; secondly, the *design* of the call, richly amplified, and enlivened by an eruptive imperative; thirdly, a strong conditional *prediction* crowning the whole.

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obedience to the Divine call placed him in virtual covenant with his God.

And this conclusion is confirmed by the interesting circumstance that when the Apostle Peter, shortly after the day of Pentecost, quoted the crowning promise of the Abrahamic covenant, he wove into it the word "families," which occurs in this first covenant-sketch alone.

Abram having arrived in the land of invitation: we next read about him as follows:—

Genesis xii. 6, 7.

"(6) And Abram passes along in the land as far as the place of Sychem, as far as the oak Moreh. Now the Canaanite [was] then in the land. (7) Then appears Yehweh unto Abram, and says: To thy seed will I give this land. So he builds there an altar unto Yehweh."

There are two things to note here: first, that the original invitation to come into a land is now deepened into a promise to give the land to Abram's seed; second, that the promise is unconditional, suiting well the fact that the only condition hitherto imposed has been complied with.

We may add regarding the first of these points—that, although God does not appear to have at first positively promised to give Abram the land to which He called him, yet some expectation of that nature must almost certainly have been originated in Abram's mind: "I am to become a great nation—I am called to view a land: there is some especial intention in this. Is the land to be for my descendants to dwell in?" To this obvious question a positive answer is now given.

Still is only given in brief; for although the Chaldean stranger has by this time seen something of the land, that something may not have been much. The showing of which God spake in Ur and in Haran has not yet been fulfilled. Everything moves on deliberately. But now for the promised showing,—to which, we are disposed to think, something less than justice is commonly done.

Genesis xiii. 14-17.

"(14) But YEHWEH said unto Abram, after the separation of Lot from him, Lift up, pray, thine eyes; and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. (15) For all the land which thou art beholding, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed, unto olam. (16) Thus will I make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, even THY SEED may be numbered. (17) Rise, walk up and down in the land, to the length thereof and to the breadth thereof; for to thee will I give it."

Plainly this is the promised showing of the land. For notice

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the great prominence here given to it. First, at the beginning of this extract, is the animated Divine entreaty to Abram to look to the four points of the compass, as if a Divine finger were directing the beholder's eye; but this is not nearly enough, for then at the close of this address to the sojourner is the remarkable injunction which directs him to make a special tour of inspection through the land—to perambulate it, in fact, with the one object of viewing it, as if to take it all in and lay clearly and brightly to his heart the dimensions, form and aspects of the land of promise. It is as if the Giver were deeply interested in the gift and wished the receiver to be so too.

And this is the next thing observable—that the promise to "show" is now again deepened into the promise to "give:" verse 15, "to thee and to thy seed;" verse 17, "to thee."

Further: we now notice for the first time a word expressive of the duration of the gift—"to thee and to thy seed FOR EVER," says the "Authorised" English Version; "TO OLAM," says the Hebrew, which for the present we transfer, quite content to judge and not at all anxious to prejudge the question as to what extent of duration is thereby intended. *To olam:* that is literally, according to the derivation of the word, *to concealed duration*, which is as good as to say—*indefinitely*. How long? No limit is made. One would naturally say (having no ends to serve) as long as the land is a land and the people are a people. For it really would appear to be just a little flippant to pick out a few cases of seemingly circumscribed duration, in which the word *olam* stands, and in the strength of them to intimate that nothing at all can be gathered from its occurrence in this promise of the land of Canaan to Abram. That is not a fair handling of the word. The Hebrew phrase, standing by itself, would never suggest an ending. Man was banished from the tree of life, lest he should put forth his hand and eat and so live to *olam* (the first instance of the word in the Bible). God's throne stands firm to *olam*. David's "Lord" is to be priest to *olam*. And so on: it is the most common way of saying "FOR EVER," from Genesis to Malachi. It follows that he who affirms a limit should make good his affirmation. Even the Hebrew servant, offered his freedom but electing to remain in servitude to a much-loved master, and who accordingly had his ear bored with the significance that he was to continue his present master's servant "for ever"—to *olam*,—furnishes no exception to the principle on which the word is used. He was to remain his servant *to concealed duration;* indefinitely; as long as the conditions should exist which made such service possible. As long as the master could be a master and the bondman could be a bondman, so long was the service to continue. And so—as we have a right to assume—just as long as Abram's seed should be capable of dwelling in a land and the land of Canaan should remain a land for men to dwell in, for so long was the land promised

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as an inheritance. We pursue this topic no further at present, save to point out that the gift of the land *to olam* is promised to Abram as well as to his seed—if *to him* FOR THEM, then it *is* "to him for them;" and to the question will and must recur, "What has ABRAHAM done to forfeit the inheritance?"

Here again, in this passage, a connection between the land and the seed is observable. The first passage said, "Come to the land, that I may make of thee a great nation;" and the idea is repeated in this place,—"I will give thee the land, &c., so will I make thy seed to be innumerable." And it seems to be so all along, though not without penal intermission, until the consummation is sighted (say) from the loftiest summit of Moses' Song, and portrayed in the profoundly significant words: "Rejoice, O ye nations with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and (rather, so or THEN) will (he) be merciful to His land and to His people"—"then will He put a propitiatory covering over His land, His people!" (Deut. xxxii. 43).

Lastly, we are struck by an important note of time as to *when* the showing of the land to Abram was vouchsafed. To arrest every reader's attention it comes at the very outset of the passage. Abram received this Divine invitation to perambulate and survey his inheritance, "after the separation of Lot from him." How significant! Abram must realise that God has called him "alone" (Is. li. 2); for Terah is dead, and now Lot has left him. There must be no trusting in an arm of flesh, no thought of propping up the promise or anxiously trying to help the Almighty. Moreover, Abram has just been acting a noble, because a peace-loving, generous, trustful part, by leaving it for his nephew to choose to the right hand or to the left hand of the country, himself accepting what Lot has declined. *He* does not care to choose. *He* will not grasp at the best of the land for the pasturing of his flocks. No, he is in the hands of his Divine Guide, and there he will leave himself. For this noble conduct God at once rewards him, inviting him now to make a sort of royal progress through the land of which his quiet confidence has made him the spiritual conqueror. We thus see how disciplinary Yehweh's dealings with Abram are becoming. God is already blessing Abram and fitting him to be a blessing. The faith and the patience of the patriarch are under loving and gentle and generous cultivation.

And still the discipline proceeds, as chapter xiv. forcibly reminds us. For Lot getting into sore trouble through his choice of the well-watered plain of the Jordan and being carried away captive by the marauding kings, thereupon Abram displays his family affection and his heroism, as before he has shown his peaceful disinterestedness. And duty bravely done brings further blessing. Abram returning from the slaughter of the kings is met by the mysterious Melchizedek, who brings forth to him bread and wine and publicly heaps blessings on his head.

JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

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THE BLESSED HOPE.

WALKING the chequered pathway where human life is past,
Now glad and bright with sunshine, and now with cloud o'ercast;
In joys that I have hoped for, in griefs that I have feared,
One promise has sustained me, one blessed hope has cheered.

It is a hope of glory, of peace, and joy, and light;
Of Christ in clouds returning to claim His kingly right;
To rule His purchased kingdom in righteousness and truth;
And to His marred creation restore the joy of youth.

And would you take it from me—this hope so dear, so blest?
In sorrow it is solace, in labour it is rest:
Whatever griefs distress me, whatever cares annoy,
This hope has power to bless me with thoughts of future joy.

This blessed hope has cheered me beside the open tomb,
A comfort in the trouble, a ray amidst the gloom—
To tell the joyous story of conquest in the strife,
Of resurrection glory, of everlasting life.

Go, cloud the morning radiance, and veil the crimson west;
Go, hush the flowing music that makes the forest blest;
Go, shroud the sparkling ocean that in the sunlight glows;
Go, steal the subtle fragrance from lily and from rose.

Yea, take the best and noblest of nature's costly dower;
Take all her peerless beauty, take all her matchless power;
And oh! not half so cheerless were such a world bereft,
As were the Saviour's Gospel without this promise left.

For sometimes feet grow weary, when hard and rough the way;
And sometimes earth seems dreary when earthly joys decay;
And then 'tis truest solace this blessed hope can bring
To those who still, in patience, are watching for their King.

Then would you take it from me? Nay, turn and seek again,
Looking to Him for guidance who makes all mysteries plain;
'Tis not the mystic fancy of warm impetuous youth,
'Tis not a dotard's vision, but God's Eternal Truth.

Oh! blessed hope of seeing Thy coming, glorious King!
Teach me this hope to cherish, teach me this hope to sing:
Teach me to live and labour as one who looks for Thee,
Till in this hope's fulfilment Thy glory I shall see. A. W.

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THE 144,000 SEALED FOR CHARACTER, NOT FOR NATIONALITY, AND WHY THE TRIBE OF DAN IS EXCEPTED.

(*Revised with addition from the* PROPHETIC NEWS *for January.*)

"FOR he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit," and has been ever since the Apostle thus wrote to the Churches of his day. "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," *and* "the children of the promise are counted for the seed," *for*, "if ye be Christ's, *then* are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." And only in the light of these New Testament Scriptures can we understand who are "the tribes of the children of Israel" in Rev. vii. 4.

It has been well said by a modern writer of considerable penetration, and the truth so expressed should be well pondered by every earnest and devout student of God's Word, that "the letter of Scripture, like the flesh of Christ, is a veil quite as much as it is a revelation, hiding while it reveals and yet revealing while it hides. The Bible resembles yet differs from other books, exactly as the flesh of Christ resembled yet differed from the flesh of other men. The Bishop of Natal has dissected the letter of Scripture till it is to him as the flesh of Christ would have been to the mere anatomist. His flesh was stripped and mocked. But those who are stripping and dissecting know not what they do" (Jukes on Restitution, S. 1).

Now, there is no part of Scripture to which this may be more truly applied than to that called "The Revelation." Had it been called "The Mystery," the treatment it receives from most Bible readers would be more accountable and excusable, but seing it is called "*The Revelation*," and a blessing is pronounced "on those who read, and who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein," neglect is most culpable. It is, however, for the most part, a book of symbols, and although fact and figure, the literal and the metaphorical seem sometimes closely allied, it is just there that we require the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the promised Guide into all truth. Nor will He fail to whisper to those who are quiet enough to hear His own still small voice, for, "to understand a proverb and the interpretation, the words of the wise and their dark sayings, a wise man will hear." We are about, then, in the light of Scripture to read Scripture, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, that we may come to a true understanding of the 144,000 sealed ones spoken of in Rev. vii.

First, then, we notice that they are not children of Jacob the *supplanter*, but children of Israel, "the *prince* who had power with God and with men, and prevailed," which shows them to be overcomers. This brings us at once to see that the names employed here as expressive of tribe are expressive of character, and therefore we propose to consider the signification of the several names here enumerated.

So, then, we observe that *Judah* signifies *the praise of the Lord*. And well fitting it is that this should be the *first* named, seeing that out of it

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sprang "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," Jehovah's chief praise. But the twelve thousand are Jehovah's praise too, if they are disciples indeed of their one Master, a people formed for Himself to show forth His praise. These are they to whom He said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples," and of whom He said, "All mine are thine and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." These shall be counted overcomers, and hence sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

In like manner, seeing that *Reuben* has for its meaning, *One who sees the Son*, we are not surprised to find twelve thousand of such a tribe sealed; for every one who sees the Son and believes on Him hath everlasting life. And those who by faith are looking unto Jesus are sure to see Him, not only the Author but the Completer of their salvation, that as He came to commence it so He is coming to complete it in raising the dead and changing the living; and thus they continue hoping to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. And this habit of seeing the Son as He came, a sufferer, as He continues, an indweller, and as He is coming, a bridegroom, has changed them into His likeness from glory into glory, so that their Father sees His Son in them, and most surely will they be found overcomers, and hence sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Then again, seeing that *Gad* reminds us of *A happy band armed and prepared*, it is just such a tribe as we should expect to see among the sealed ones: for, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" Armed and prepared for the conflict, and ever engaged with the foe in aggressive or defensive warfare, giving no truce to the enemy in the presence and under command of her Leader and Commander, "The Word of God," who is presently to lead forth in triumph the armies of heaven upon white horses clothed in fine linen, white and clean. These are they who have "endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," and although accounted sheep for slaughter, have in all these things come off far more than conquerors through Him that hath loved them. Therefore we are not surprised to find twelve thousand of such a tribe numbered among the overcomers, and hence sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Nor shall *Naphtali* be missed, seeing that he is *One who in comparison bears the likeness*, for they are all predestinated to become conformed to the image of His Son; and that He might bring the many sons to glory He became likened to them in suffering and death that they might become likened to Him in resurrection life, and glory. And the Father, of whom they have been all begotten, looks upon them that He may see them in comparison with His Son, bearing somewhat of His image. For only can He look on them with complacency as seeing the likeness that He approves, He can say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and only as they wear the likeness of their Beloved, can He say, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

"Defiled and loathsome as they are,
He makes them white and calls them fair;
What mighty wonders love performs
To put a comeliness on worms."

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As the tents of Kedar in themselves; as the courts of Solomon in Him. Black in themselves; but comely in Him. And only can they bear comparison with Him as they are grafted into Him, abiding in Him, fruitful in Him, and so well pleasing to the Father in Him. This to them is, "to walk worthy of Him unto all pleasing," to manifest *Him* a life in *them*. Therefore do we not wonder to see twelve thousand of this tribe accounted overcomers, and as servants of our God, sealed in their foreheads.

Manasseh, too, shall not be forgotten of His God, seeing that his name indicates *One who forgets and is forgotten*, for the men of his tribe have in love for their Lord forgotten their own people and their first father's house, that so the beauty of their devotedness might meet the desire and approval of their King. And thus they are soon forgotten and cast off by the world, so that their language becomes, "I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were;" or again, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children." But not forgotten of their God, He saith to each one of them, "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands, thy walls"—thy wants—"are continually before Me." Nor shall they be forgotten in that day "when He writeth up the people;" for of such we read, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Therefore are we not surprised to find twelve thousand such counted overcomers, and, as the servants of our God, sealed in their foreheads.

Then comes *Simeon*, as *One that hears and obeys and is heard himself*, and circumcised in heart and in ear: we find their language to be, "Thou hast opened mine ear as the ear of the learned," and with their ear bored to the doorpost of their master's house, in sign of perpetual service, they abide in the house for ever, like sons. For hearing Him they live, and living obey, and in the path of obedience are heard in all they ask. Like their great Example they have learned to hear and obey in the path of endurance, and so are able to say, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt. The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" And while in this path of endurance their language is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" their hearkening attitude, thus secured, enables them to say, "If we ask anything according to His will He heareth us, and if He hear us, we know that whatsoever we ask we receive of Him." Therefore should we expect to see such as these chosen to serve Him day and night in His kingdom, and overcomers, sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

In *Levi* we find *One who is held and associated*, and truly they are held up, held in, and held on their way by association with the "Strength of Israel, that will not lie nor repent." Having learned wherein their strength lies—not in themselves, like Samson's locks that might be shorn, but in Him, their Jehovah-tsidkenu—they cry continually, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe," for their strength and righteousness consists in the keeping of Another. As members of a mystical body, too, they are associated one with another in Him, and "holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands hath its nourishment ministered," they find their completeness in Him. He is their wisdom to know and their power to do or endure all His appointed will. These

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are the truly royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people, who, without portion or inheritance on earth, have the Lord for their portion and inheritance, and so become numbered among the overcomers, and sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

In *Issachar* we find men of *price, reward, and recompence;* given of the Father to the Son for a covenant seed, as the price, reward, and recompence of His sufferings and death, and in them He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. Given to Him for a bride "that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might Himself present unto Himself the Church glorious, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish" (see Alford). These children of Issachar have been always "men that had understanding of their times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32). And faithful to God, have stood up for Him; not for price, reward, or recompence from their fellow-men, but in loyalty to Him whom they love and serve, having respect unto His recompence of reward in that day. Therefore are we not surprised to find *this* tribe among the overcomers, and sealed as servants of our God in their foreheads.

In *Zebulun*, we find signified *A dwelling and habitation;* and, surely, these are they who have become an habitation for God through the Spirit. Their bodies, the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are called "lively stones built up a spiritual house;" and concerning them as sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, He saith, "I will dwell in them and walk in them; they shall be My people, and I will be their God." From the beginning His delights have been with the sons of men. With Adam He walked in Eden in the cool of the day; and walking with God has been the sign of faith in the faithful ever since. And, finally, we are to hear a voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them," the earnest of which we have now fulfilled in the promise, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him; at that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, ye in Me and I in you." Of such a tribe as this, we should expect to see twelve thousand reckoned as overcomers, and sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

In the tribe of *Joseph*, we find *Men of increase and addition* in abundance, for the archers have made them their mark; and, sorely grieved and wounded, they have been "broken in the place of dragons, and oft covered with the shadow of death." But through fire and through water they have been brought out into a wealthy place, and all the pruning and discipline has turned to account for fruit-bearing to the glory of the Great Husbandman. As members of the mystical body of Christ, "by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, they are knit together, and increase with the increase of God." Going from strength to strength, and receiving grace for grace, they grow in grace, and so "add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity," until at length "an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto them into the everlasting kingdom of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in that kingdom, they are accounted overcomers, and sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

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Lastly, we see in *Benjamin, The son of the right hand*, followers of Him to whom the Father hath said, "Sit Thou at my right hand until I make Thy foes Thy footstool," and to whom He hath Himself said, "He that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His throne." These sons of the right hand are men of *power*, through whom God effects His purpose of witness among men, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen." Concerning them Christ saith through Isaiah, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for the signs and wonders in Israel, from the Lord of hosts which dwelleth in Mount Zion;" and through Zechariah He calls them "men wondered at." These are the stars in the right hand of Him that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, shining in His light and upheld by His power, He lays His right hand upon them, saying, "Fear not;" to which they respond, "Because thou art at my right hand I shall not be moved." Therefore should we expect to find this tribe among the overcomers, and sealed as the servants of our God in their foreheads.

But we *miss* the tribe of *Dan*, and right glad we are at length to miss it, significant as it is of *Judgment, or One that judges;* for these "judges of evil thoughts" have been sad troublers in Israel for ages, not fearing to judge their brother and set at nought their brother, they have judged everything and everybody but themselves. All who have not pronounced their Shibboleth, or seen not eye to eye with them, have been adjudged as heretics, not to be tolerated but tabooed to the extent of their ability. In vain for them has it been written, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Like their great ancestor of this tribe, they deal in foxes and firebrands, and too often set on fire their neighbours' standing corn, an act we have never been able to commend even in Samson. This predilection for foxes and firebrands has unhappily developed in the seed of Dan to this day. And so in the place of Dan, *The judge*, we get Manasseh, *One who forgets*, one who, though cast off by his brethren, forgets and forgives their injuries, and we account it a *good exchange*, and in the New Jerusalem home where failure will be no more, Dan, "a serpent in the way" or "a lion's whelp," would be as much out of *work* as out of *place*.

Thus, surely, we have in the names of the tribes enumerated as sealed ones, "the excellent of the earth," upon whom the seal of Divine complacency rests, as upon those who shall be sheltered in the coming storm and eventually caught away to meet their coming Lord. These are they "who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty, so that a thousand shall fall at their side and ten thousand at their right hand, but it shall not come nigh them; only with their eyes shall they behold and see the reward of the wicked." For, like their prototype in Egypt, the children of Israel were sheltered under the blood while the Angel of death smote their enemies, so these shall be sheltered under this sealing of the angel awhile after the storm of judgment has commenced, and as men of faith they shall shine as stars in the world's midnight. For we read, when locusts, like scorpions, appear under the sounding of the fifth angel, "it was com-

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manded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (Rev. ix. 4).

And what are these various names but so many features of the *one Name*, expressive of the *one nature*, in which all so endowed shall presently be swallowed up and lost, *the one Jehovah-tsidkenu*, which name the Bridegroom and the Bride are mutually to share. For this is the name whereby *He* shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness (Jer. xxiii. 6), and, This is the name wherewith *she* shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness (Jer. xxxiii. 16), which is seen to be the work of the Holy Spirit during the present age, in visiting the Gentiles "to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts xv. 14). Having taken out of "the natural branch," a goodly remnant in the past age, He is now taking out of "the branch wild by nature but grafted into the good olive tree," a further remnant, and thus is "making ready a people prepared for the Lord." And when she shall be seen coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, *both* branches shall be seen *combined* in the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb inscribed on her foundations, and *these* names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel inscribed on her gates.

Now, that it is the true Israel of God, and not the seed of Jacob after the flesh, which are here intended, should be manifest to the least spiritual discernment, as well as to the most superficial observer of prophecy. Beyond preserving their nationality for the purposes of His grace in the coming age, God has had no dealings in grace with the Jews, nor will He have *during this age*, wherein they have rejected His Son from becoming their King. If our reading of prophecy be correct, *two tribes alone* return to Palestine and rebuild their city, which eventually becomes the seat of the Antichrist, and when the nations lay siege to it, it is taken with such difficulty that "two thirds are cut off and die" before the Lord goes forth to plead with those nations and save the third part from extermination.

We ask objectors then, Where? When? How? as to time, space, or place, *could* such a work of evangelisation take place among *literal Jews* as to convert 144,000, and especially twelve thousand of each tribe, when two tribes alone are restored? And when, during this age, a Jew is converted, does he remain a Jew nationally? Do we not baptize him in the name of Christ as a Christian? How then shall distinction of Jewish tribe be consistent, under this age, with conversion to Christ their true Messiah? Rather let us, in reading, understand the words of Amos the prophet of Tekoa, echoed by James the Apostle in Jerusalem, "*After* this (age) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Acts xv. 16, 17).

Before closing, we venture to suggest to our readers that the 144,000 of Romans vii. 4, and the *same* number of Rev. xiv. 1, are *not identical*, although the latter may include the former, as the greater includes the lesser. In each case the number is symbolical of a class that *can* be numbered and *are* numbered, and therefore an elect number, distinct from

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"the multitude which no man can number" (Rev. vii. 9), but the former, on *earth*, the bride militant, and therefore *incomplete*, the latter in *heaven*, the bride triumphant, and therefore *complete*. These, including as they will the subjects of the first resurrection as well as the living saints changed, may be taken to mean an hundred and forty and four thousand *thousand*, and not simply an hundred and forty and four thousand *units*. However that may be, the body in its completeness it *will* be, Head and members; neither a maimed body, nor a monster; not one member missing, nor one in excess.

Now for its application. Will all believers be sealed? Will all teachers of others, professors or preachers of Second Advent truth, prove overcomers? May not some who have been longest and loudest in testimony to this truth be most in temptation to say, "My Lord delayeth His coming?" Can any be accounted overcomers unless they endure in testimony unto the end? And, lastly, we ask, Will all the regenerated be pavilioned during the coming judgments and eventually be caught away to meet the Lord? *We* reply: Not unless grace in them has conquered sin, proving them to be *servants of our God;* Not unless *seeing the Son* they become, *in comparison with Him*, bearers of His likeness; Not unless *hearing and obeying Him* they become *forgotten ones* in the world and *forgetful* of the wrongs done to them, forgive the wrongdoers. Not unless *upheld by God* and *in association with Him*, they are seen as the *price, reward, and recompence* of His soul-travail. Not unless *indwelt* by God, *an habitation for God* through the Spirit, they *add* grace to grace, strength to strength, ever increasing with the *increase of God*. Not unless as *sons of His right hand* they are manifestly the *praise of their Heavenly Bridegroom*. Where spiritual life is developed after this manner, we have no difficulty in tracing the features of the Bride, the Lamb's wife,—*nor will* "the angel ascending from the East, having the seal of the living God" for their foreheads (Rev. vii. 2).

Hackney, London, E. NATHANIEL STARKEY.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. II.

The Incarnation.—Reasons for it Considered.

WE frequently hear and read that no reason can be given why the terms and means of man's redemption should be what they are, except that it pleased God so to appoint it. The coming of the Son of God, His victory over evil, His radiant life, His obedience unto death, His resurrection and ascension, are to such persons only mysterious antecedents necessary to the establishment of certain conditions to which, by the arbitrary appointment of Jehovah, the creature man must conform if he would be saved. Christ thus preached is simply a ticket to heaven, and the inference is fairly deducible that had the Father made jumping over a stone exactly two feet high the only way of salvation, it would have equally answered the purpose. It is difficult to comprehend the mental and spiritual limitation in a man whose language could seem to imply such an opinion.

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Christianity is the highest reason, and it would seem impossible for any one to contemplate the Gospel steadily for ten minutes, or to know it experimentally for one, without finding a clue to labyrinths of wisdom and feeling a demonstration that there alone is life. Surely nothing is more self-evident than that adaptability of means to ends was never more gloriously displayed by the Almighty Father than when the work He set Himself to accomplish was the salvation of man. All the evidences of adaptation in the material world, produced by evolution, as God's method of design, pale in significance and splendour before the incomparable manifestation of it in the work of our redemption. There is salvation in none other than Christ, because, by the nature of the case, salvation apart from faith in Him is impossible to man; that is, understanding by salvation the begetting in man of the image of God.* We may rest assured that man being what he is, and man's proper end being what God has declared He wills it, even to the Almighty, there existed no alternative but to send His only begotten Son into the world.

We mean but to touch the fringe of the inexhaustible glories within it when we reverently broach the inquiry, "Why was God manifest in the flesh?" We say there was a necessity for it, and that necessity was related to the creature, and not to God. It was not that He might know man's case more intimately than as the Creator He must have known it from the first. It was not that He might "know what sore temptations mean," for He had "felt the same" from the day when Eve succumbed. It was not to gratify a paternal yearning to mix in the company of His erring and unhappy offspring, that if He could not save, He might suffer with them, and be afflicted in the afflictions of His chosen, for "in Him" they had always "lived and moved, and had their being," and He encompassed them about on every side. It was not that His judgment of mankind might be done in justice and in truth, for the Incarnation could add nothing to the perfections of Deity, or render more absolute the original responsibility of man.

We say none of these things necessitated the Incarnation, for if every created thing is an expression of a thought of God, that thought is clear not cloudy. We cannot conceive of adaptation and design, nor could we recognise in creation a moral act, were the Creator incapable of knowing the conditions of life to which He had given rise—of course a solecism in thought. We stand on the borderland of the vegetable kingdom, and question if it has a sentient existence. God alone keeps the secret of this, and if in truth the flower feels when it turns to the sun, God feels with it. When the seawave that combs the green sea hair tumbles into a rocky pool, and slipping round the slumbering anemones starts their Briarean arms and countless cilias as they rush to seize a passing opportunity, the magic of that watery touch upon the living fibre is known to God as well as to those humble beings. If not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Heavenly Father, it is because God falls with it. Creation is God's pulse. Whatever of truth lay in the dim guesses of the Pagan world, Christianity proclaims with clearness, and Pantheism among the rest, God is all and in all. It was the thought

* We say "begetting" instead of "restoring," because it can only be proper to speak of Adam before the fall as possessing the *mould* of the Divine Image. Christ alone enables man to fill that mould,

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that ravished Chalmers as he left the crowded Trongate behind and made for the silent country, where, stretched under trees and face to sky, he listened for eight hours to the Christian's Pan singing His own praises on the world's great harp. Here we shall be confronted by the mystery of evil and the appearances of a dualism in nature. Receive or deny it who may, we hold that a world with evil in it is the only school in which man's education can be prosecuted to a certain essential stage—the only temple in which the glories of the Fatherhood can be initially displayed. Evil and misery are soils congenial to the fructification of certain seeds of highest good and blessing. Hence we read with acquiescence, "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil," in the world, from which "righteousness" is afterwards to "spring." We can suggest nothing as to the reign of evil over the irresponsible sentient creation, but we know that it suffers for man's sake and will share in man's redemption. We return to say that if God's knowledge of His inferior creation is thus intimate, His knowledge of man is certainly not less so. Omniscience, one of the recognised attributes of Deity, is His throughout eternity. God knew man's hunger and thirst, his toil and weariness, his sharp assaults from evil powers, the care and trouble of his life and the bitterness of his death, before that ever the devil met the Lord Christ fasting, or that Jesus sank weary by the well of Sychar, or felt the kiss of Judas, or hung upon the cross. All that was new to man in the revelation of God that Jesus made was old as the bosom of the Father on which the Son had learned His will; nothing of surprising tenderness and mercy displayed in Galilee and Judea, but what the choir of heaven discerned as but an echo of the past. "Son, be of good cheer." "Be of good cheer." "It is I, be not afraid." "Let not your hearts be troubled." "Go and sin no more"—these were old words muffled in the thunders of Sinai and chanted by the returning waves of the Red Sea. History is God's veil more than His revelation; Christ came and rent the veil, and during a ministry of three years the world gazed into the holy of holies and beheld Jehovah as man's Father, Mother and Brother. It was no altered disposition in God that Christ revealed. The new dispensation and the new covenant had their origin in the Eternal Heart which was and is and ever shall be one with Christ's. Invisibly the Eternal Father had gone with all godly mourners to the grave of a dear deceased to comfort and to cheer, before ever, wending to the grave of Lazarus, Jesus wept. Hagar as well as Mary, the widow of Sarepta as well as she of Cana, Cain as well as Peter, had been comforted of God.

All, we repeat, that seemed new in the Godhead which Christ revealed was only new because without manifestation in the flesh God could not make Himself adequately known to man.

Herein then lay the necessity of the Incarnation; creaturely limitation demanded it. Prechristian faith strove to penetrate the darkness that enveloped the Divine character, and went some way towards it, but fell lamentably short.

It was by visions and angels—adumbrations of the Incarnation—that the faith of the Patriarchs was sustained. The Pagan world in all its idolatries cried out for an Emmanuel. The weakness and unprofitableness of the dispensations that preceded Christ consisted in their want of

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the Incarnation, to which, however, they pointed and led up. It was necessary for such a creature as man that out of the darkness of that excess of light in which eternity hides Him, God should come forth, an apprehensible phenomenon walking among the sons of time.

In no other way could man groping after God feel and find Him. In no other way could the ideal Son of Man and Child of God be shown him. In no other way could sin be truly seen, souls own an allurement that quenched temptation, and the defect in faith and obedience that produced the fall be replaced by adoring faith and love towards the self-same Lord and Master who in Eden was betrayed. In no other way could the thoughts of many hearts be revealed, and man's probation receive its cardinal qualification. The probation of no man is complete to whom God has not been made manifest in Christ. It is significant that all judgment is committed unto the Son; but this follows of necessity from the Son having been God's fullest revelation to the world. All sin thenceforward became Christ-ward, and as now it is Christ-first-Advent-ward, so after the second coming sin will be Christ-second-Advent-ward. Always the latest and fullest revelation of God must judge the subjects of it. And this leads us to remark of the second Advent that it will shed the brightest light upon the glories of the first, and that the highest significance of the first Advent lies in its relation to the second. The consideration of this subject must, however, be deferred to our next paper.

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THE AUTHENTICITY OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES IN REGARD TO THE BIRTH, SUFFERINGS, AND GLORY OF CHRIST.

THAT Christ died for the sins of the people, is a thing admitted by nearly all persons who may be said to come under the category of professing Christians, but the position He presently occupies and is yet to occupy forms matter for dissension on all hands. In this paper I purpose endeavouring to show that all the prophecies in regard to the birth and sufferings of Christ were literally fulfilled. I will also attempt, in my humble way, to define what is really meant by the glory that was to follow Christ's sufferings, and at the outset will go so far as to assert that the prophecies in regard to this glory will, as the birth and sufferings, have a literal fulfilment.

At an early period of the world's history we find that God made man of the dust of the ground, and having placed him in a beautiful garden—the Garden of Eden—he (the man) was requested not to partake of a certain fruit, or if he did so, a penalty was to be inflicted. This man, Adam, partook of the forbidden fruit, and as the result of this disobeying God's order, sin was introduced into this world, and death by sin. The penalty attached by God to disobedience was death. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," are the words as recorded in the book of Genesis—thou, Adam, shalt cease to be a living man. Such was the penalty with which Adam was threatened in the event of his disobeying God's orders. He disobeyed—he broke the law of the Garden,

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and do we find the Creator repenting that He had threatened the man with death? No, we do not; for after the sin was committed we find the Lord appears unto Adam, and passes the following sentence:—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Adam, the transgressor, was then driven out of the garden "lest he should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and live for ever." He was not permitted to partake of the tree of life—being prevented from doing so by God—and so the logical conclusion is that he cannot live for ever. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," was the fate pronounced by God upon the fallen father of our race, and now "in Adam all die, all are of the dust of the ground, all turn to dust again." I don't think I will be saying too much if I state that according to the prevailing traditions of the present day this sentence passed by God upon sinful man is utterly *nil*—it is made of none effect. If man is endowed with an immortal soul, why should those holy men of old, who only spoke as the God of heaven gave them utterance, have been permitted to participate in such delusions as to enable them to write as Job did when he says—"As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep." That the sentence passed by God upon Adam was real death must surely be apparent, and so "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Such was the condition into which the first man, by his disobedience, landed the human race; but soon the Father of love interposes, and at an early date promises to bring forward *One in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed.* Adam was not, we have found, permitted to partake of the tree of life lest he should live for ever; another tree of life is soon promised, however, in the person of the Christ, and so we find that those patriarchs of old who figure prominently in Bible history all died in the expectation of a promised Redeemer of the earth. So strong was Job in the belief of a Redeemer of the earth that he gave vent to the words—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." This was the extent of Job's faith and hope, and perhaps there is not a more expressive confession within the whole Book of life.

Having thus referred briefly to how sin was introduced into the world, and the consequences thereof, I will now turn more directly to my subject, confining myself chiefly to Isaiah—naturally considering first the prophecies in connection with the birth of Christ; secondly, the sufferings; and thirdly, or lastly, the glory that was to follow. In Isaiah vii. 14, we read, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Again, in the ninth chapter, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Councillor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the

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throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Such is an extract from the prophecies of Isaiah, and now I will compare these words with the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary, as recorded by Luke. In the first chapter of Luke's Gospel, we read that the angel Gabriel was sent by God unto Nazareth, "to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary." The words of the angel to Mary were, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his *father David*: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His *kingdom there shall be no end*." Thus we see that the angel delivered his mission in nearly the same words as those given by Isaiah, and surely there can be no dubiety as to the Prince referred to by the Prophet. The time comes when this promised son is born, and in the country where the birth took place, we are informed by Luke that there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night, when an angel of the Lord came upon them and said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." In every particular then we find that—in connection with the birth of Christ—the prophecies of Isaiah were fulfilled to the very letter.

I now turn to the sufferings of Christ. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we read, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. . . . He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb. . . . He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." This is indeed a very graphic description of the sufferings of Christ, written 700 years before the events were accomplished. How true are the words, "He was oppressed, He was afflicted!" Do we not find corroboration to these words by the words of our Lord Himself, when in the Garden of Gethsemane, he says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." When the time for His crucifixion draws nigh, even His little band of disciples forsook Him, and so He was despised and rejected by *all men*—hence the words in Isaiah, "He was despised." After Christ had been crucified the soldiers took His garments and made four parts, but His coat being woven from the top throughout, they said, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it," and so the twenty-second Psalm was fulfilled, where we read, "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." Jesus, while He was upon the Cross, knowing that all the prophecies with reference to His crucifixion were nearly fulfilled, exclaimed, "I thirst." In response to this exclamation His crucifiers put a sponge filled with vinegar to His mouth, and thus the twenty-first verse of the Psalm lxix. was fulfilled. This verse reads, "They gave me also gall for my meat, in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." "It is finished," were

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the last words of our Saviour on the cross, and being dead before the soldiers came to Him they brake not His legs—as was the custom—"These things," says the Apostle John, "being done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." "A bone of Him shall not be broken, they shall look on Him whom they pierced." Thus we see that every jot and tittle of the prophecies in connection with the birth and sufferings of Christ were fulfilled to the very letter. And now I turn to the last division of my subject, namely, the glory of Christ. I will endeavour to point out what constitutes this glory, what has been accomplished by Christ's death, and the promise held out to those who accept Him as *the* Christ, the Anointed One, the Prince of Peace, the Son of God.

Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, says: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." I will therefore try to show what constitutes this joy, and the authenticity of the prophecies regarding this joy or glory. Turning again to Isaiah ix. 7, we read, "Of the increase of His government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." I would ask the question, Is Christ presently sitting upon the throne of His father David, or has He been on that throne and vacated it? Surely not, because Jeremiah clearly defines the situation of this throne when he says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is His name, whereby she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." Let us mark that the words are "a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth," while Daniel, in referring to the same kingdom says, "That the dominion and greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven* (not in the heavens, but under) shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. . . . And all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Jeremiah states that the king who shall reign, and under whose righteous government Israel is to dwell safely, shall be called, "The Lord our Righteousness." Now, I ask, is not "The Lord our Righteousness" here referred to, directly pointed to in the preceding words, "I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch?" "By the offence of one (says Paul) judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the *righteousness* of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Jesus Christ is "the Lord our Righteousness." He alone is designated in the Scriptures Jesus Christ, the Righteous, the Righteous Judge, the Prince of Peace, or as Paul puts it in his letter to the Romans, "Christ is the end of the law for *righteousness* to every one that believeth." But in order to get a clear and distinct understanding as to who this "Righteous Branch" really is, as spoken of in the passages I have cited from the prophecies Isaiah and Jeremiah, I would again turn to Luke's account of the visit of the angel Gabriel to Mary, the mother of the Branch. In the Old Testament we have found that a King, a Righteous Branch, a lineal descendant of David, is to sit upon a throne upon the earth. And in

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Luke i. 31, we read, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, (now mark what follows) and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. . . He shall be called the Son of God." Is this not authenticity? Are the words of the angel to Mary not to the same effect as those recorded in Isaiah and Jeremiah? I maintain they are; and the angel's words to Mary were a renewal of God's promise to the Prophets, a renewal, and in the birth of Christ a partial fulfilment, of those promises made—and recorded in the Book of life—to those holy men of old, "who died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them." Are the words of the angel Gabriel not a renewal of that oath of God to David—that oath which, as recorded in Psalm cxxxii., reads—"The Lord has sworn in truth unto David, He will not turn from it, of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Has Christ ever sat upon this throne? I assert that He has not; but that He shall do is universally taught in Scripture: and the sitting upon this throne, I maintain, is the glory that was to follow the sufferings on the cross. Some men at present affirm that the kingdom spoken of in the Scriptures under the name of "the Kingdom of God" and "the Kingdom of heaven," is none other than the place where the Almighty God presently dwells. Another theory is, that the kingdom referred to under the above titles is, "our present churches;" but how can men give credence to such an idea as this latter one in the face of the words of Christ, when He says, "Verily, I say unto you (the Jews), among them that are born of woman there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Can it be possible, then, that there are greater men in our present Churches than John the Baptist? for, if the Church is the Kingdom, men do really assert this. John the Baptist said, "that He (Christ) that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." Is there a single man connected with the greatest church presently on this earth worthy to bear the shoes of John the Baptist? Is there a single theologian alive who would claim presently to be greater than John the Baptist? Surely there is none who would be so presumptuous. I maintain there is not; and if there is not, then the Church cannot be the Kingdom, for the least in the kingdom of heaven is to be "greater than John the Baptist." Again, how can the theory that the heaven is the kingdom spoken of in all the passages I have advanced be reconciled with the words, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you (the Jews), and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Had the Jews ever a kingdom in heaven? My answer is *no;* and, while the Kingdom of God shall be universal, although it will extend "under the whole heaven," the Kingdom shall have its centre in Palestine, just as the kingdom of England, extending into many other countries, has its centre in London. Isaiah says, "The Lord shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, for out of Zion shall come the law, and the Word of God from Jerusalem." Scripture and such theories—traditions of men shall I say?—as above mentioned, do not agree. That the

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apostles longed for the establishment of this kingdom, of which I speak, at a very early period of Christ's history upon this earth, is very apparent from the earliest writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They (the apostles) and Jewish believers seemed at all times to be absorbed in the things pertaining to this kingdom, and so they entirely overlooked the fact that Christ, the Redeemer, was to suffer before their expectation could be realised. In Matt. xvi. 21 we find that "Jesus began to show to His disciples how that He must suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and raised again the third day." Peter, at the hearing of these words, "rebuked his Lord and Master," thus showing that he and the other apostles were entirely overlooking the prophecies relating to the sufferings. Is the constitution of the kingdom the Jews looked for not definitely pointed to in Luke xix. 11? "Because they (the people) thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear, He (Jesus) spake a parable of a nobleman going to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." Thus we find Christ telling His apostles that He is about to suffer, that after these sufferings He is to go to a far country, like the nobleman who sojourns throughout the world; but He is to receive for Himself a kingdom, *and to return*. What are we to infer from this parable? Is not our once crucified Lord the Nobleman? Has He not gone to the far country—the heavens—there to receive for Himself a kingdom, and *to return*?

In the last chapter of Luke's gospel, also, we have recorded a remarkable, an eventful journey of two disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus. As they journeyed thither, Jesus, after He had risen from the dead, drew near and conversed with them. These two disciples, as they "trudged" along the road, were evidently suffering from disappointment, and were naturally sad at heart. One of the two, whose name was Cleopas, in conversing with Jesus, said, "Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? . . . . . the things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him; but we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Now let us consider well our Lord's answer. He does not say to Cleopas and his companion that the redemption of Israel is a delusion, and that, instead of redeeming Israel, He is to ascend to heaven, and all saints will follow him thither. Nay; His answer was, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Note, that He expounded *all the things* concerning Himself contained in the prophets; and, seeing He *expounded all things*, I don't think it will be inferring too much when I state that He would refer to the very same prophecies as I have advanced from the prophets relating to His kingdom, which, as described by Isaiah and by the angel of the Lord, *is to be on the throne of David and upon the earth*. Here again our Lord points directly to the kingdom as being the glory that was to follow the sufferings.

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No sooner had Christ met with His disciples after the crucifixion than they took the first opportunity of putting the question, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Here, again, as in connection with the Emmaus journey, if the kingdom had been a delusion, our Lord would have set His apostles—whom He *loved so much*—right. He does not say, "This idea of restoring Israel is a delusion; I shall never restore again the kingdom to Israel." On the contrary, His answer was, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons," which is surely an equivalent to, "Israel shall be restored, but it is not for you to know the time," the Almighty having reserved that to Himself. Some time after Christ is separated from His apostles, and is taken up into heaven. He has gone to that far country; and, shall He not return? Yes, He shall return; for, as He ascends, in case His disciples should again participate in disappointment, as they did when He was crucified, an angel appears on the scene and utters the comforting words, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

This is only one of the many authorities I could quote to show that the Nobleman has gone to the far country, *and to return;* but surely there is enough assurance in these words alone to satisfy even the most exacting; yes, even the most doubtful. Well might we exclaim, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord," for truly this kingdom is the glory that is to follow the sufferings. How significant this word *come* is. It is frequently used in New Testament Scriptures, *until He come.* He shall come; and who does not remember the words, "If I go I will come again, that where I am there you may be also." The near approach of this kingdom became the burden of apostolic teaching after Christ ascended into the heavens, and so we are informed "that after the people believed, they were baptized, both men and women." I repeat that our Lord has gone to heaven, and to return, but of the day of His return knoweth no man; no, not even the angels in heaven. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Watch therefore (is the admonition of the apostle), for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." The coming of Christ is thus compared to the flood; and all surely agree that the earth was really flooded, that the people, with the exception of Noah and his family, all died; and, if the coming of Christ is to be like the flood, will His coming not be to this earth? If not, then the earth never was flooded, and the antediluvians must have survived the deluge.

Now, I think, I have so far shown that the Old Testament prophecies in regard to the birth and sufferings of Christ were literally fulfilled, and at this point I would ask the question, Why should the prophecies relating to His occupying "the throne of His father David" be tossed aside as being figurative, as being metaphorical? Why should these

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prophecies be annulled and made of no effect? Let us not be deceived, for "He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." Such is the assurance that this kingdom of which I speak shall have a real existence as given in Isaiah, while in Jeremiah are Jehovah's own words, which as recorded are, "Behold, the days come (or they shall come), saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. In those days and at that time will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." We have surely found that our Lord died, and that He rose again according to Scripture prophecy. We have also found that He has gone to the heavens "to receive a kingdom and to return"—the Scriptures say this. These are not my words, but, on the contrary, the words of men who only wrote as the God of heaven gave them utterance. Are not these words confirmed by the all-assuring promise, "If I go I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

I venture to affirm that it is the immortality-of-the-soul theory that has given rise to the heaven-at-death doctrine. And so the Scripture teaching of a resurrection and a second appearing of Christ on this earth is annulled, is made *nil*, alas! shall I say, by the traditions of men. Christ's resurrection was a real one. He told His disciples He would be killed, and the third day "raised again." Paul says, "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him." In another place he says, "If the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Thus we have it demonstrated that Christ was really raised from the dead, and if it be true that righteous men go to heaven at death, surely Christ would have gone. He did not go to heaven, however, for on the authority of Isaiah, "He made his soul an offering for sin, He poured out His soul unto death." I say, What is the use of a resurrection and a great day of judgment—a day of recompense, Luke xiv. 14—if people wing their flight to heaven or hell, as the case may be, immediately after death? In John v. 25, we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live," while Paul asserts, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins; and they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. . . . What advantageth me if the dead rise not? But (he says) now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." "He is the resurrection and the life. He (says Christ Himself) that believeth on Me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and I will raise him up at the last day." This last day is the day of recompense, the resurrection day, the day when all that hear His voice shall live. Paul in his letter to the Hebrews says, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salva-

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tion," while in Philippians iii. 20, we read, "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." So let us take the advice of Peter, "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." How great is the necessity for all men girding up their loins, for "we have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." No man knoweth when our Lord may come, but we are admonished by the Apostle James "to be patient unto the coming of the Lord. Stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Again, we are taught, we are exhorted, by our Lord to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." If this kingdom be already come, why should we pray, "Thy kingdom come?" And at present, in these days of Nihilism, Socialism, and the other isms prevalent in the various countries of the world, is there anything approaching to the time referred to in the words, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven?"

Is it possible that so long as the curse pronounced upon the earth, in consequence of man's disobedience, remains, God's will can be done? Is the present time not the time "when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, when nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom?" Are we not daily in the midst of turmoil and wars, and is man's incapacity to govern man not demonstrated to us every day we live? That vexed "Eastern Question" and other matters, keep the governors of this and other countries in a continual broil, but in the coming kingdom of Christ—the glory to follow the sufferings—all shall be harmony, and

> No strife shall rage, nor hostile feuds
> Disturb those peaceful years;
> To ploughshares men shall beat their swords,
> To pruning hooks their spears.

Happy time! May it speedily dawn! "Thy kingdom come!"

A. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

SIR,—Allow me to suggest another reply to the question asked and answered in the article, "The Cloud of Witnesses," in the January number of the RAINBOW.

I fully assent to the conclusion there arrived at, that "the notion of souls in heaven witnessing the career of saints on earth must be given up as destitute of foundation, either in fact or Scripture;" and the practical exhortation to a holy walk with which the article concludes, is good for us all. But what objection is there to the following reply?

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews tells us what faith is; it tells us that by faith "the elders obtained a good report;" it gives many instances of the faith and trust that they had in God, and of the trials through which, and in which, they manifested that faith. But they

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"received not the promise." That is still awaiting its fulfilment, for "without us they should not be made perfect." They now rest from their labours till the resurrection morn shall call them forth to receive their reward. Then we, who before that shall have been caught up to the Lord in the air, will welcome them, and we and they shall together be perfected. Meanwhile (see twelfth chapter), we are to contemplate, and, if necessary, to appeal to that cloud of witnesses; we are to "lay aside every weight," and to "run with patience the race set before us;" we are, above all, to look unto Jesus, "the author and finisher of faith," not as the A. V. has it, "of our faith." *He*, through supreme trials, showed His faith, and is the author and finisher of faith; the cloud of witnesses in the old times, including (chap. xi. 29) the nation of Israel, manifested their faith; we are now to manifest *our* faith.

With such examples before us how can we fail? But if our faith begins to fail, listen to the apostle's cheering trumpet-call, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 35-37).

Yours truly,

Ealing. G. J. S.

"HELPERS TO THE TRUTH."

DEAR SIR,—I rejoice to find friends sending help for the continuance of the RAINBOW, and trust many more will do likewise. I know of no publication to take its place, and you, my dear sir, ought not to be allowed to bear the burden any longer, while so many have been eternally benefited by the truths which you so nobly advocate. I gladly enclose cheque for £7 2s., £5 as a donation, and two guineas as an annual subscription.

Trusting it may please our Father to spare your life to see brighter days for the RAINBOW,

I remain, my dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,

W. R. G.

416, Mare St. Hackney.

A REPLY.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Nathaniel Starkey, in the January RAINBOW, wishes a preterist to reply to his note on the 5th chapter of Revelation. Would you kindly allow me a short space?

My belief is that the Apocalypse has been fulfilled, and, as St. John repeatedly states, is a vision or revelation which God gave to him to show unto His servants the things which—at that time—were *shortly to come to pass;* in fact, immediately to happen.

The book referred to in the 5th chapter was, no doubt, similar to the "roll of a book" seen by Ezekiel, whose vision in many respects agrees with St. John's. See Ezek. ii. Sealed, so that when one seal was broken, the manuscript could be unrolled till the second seal was broken, and so on to the end. This is precisely what happened in St. John's vision. It should, however, be noted that the prophet Daniel was commanded to *seal* up his prophecy until the time of the end. That end St. John saw; and, therefore, we read that he was commanded to leave his prophecy *unsealed*, because the events depicted were then about to happen. The Lamb (Jesus Christ) takes the book (chap. v. 7), and

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(chap. vi. 1) commences to break the seals. Therefore, according to my view, the book is *not* still in the hand of Him that sitteth on the throne, and the seals are also *all* broken.

Yours faithfully,
T. MAY.

LITERATURE.

The Coming Prince, the last great Monarch of Christendom. By ROBERT ANDERSON, LL.D., Barrister-at-Law, etc., Author of "The Gospel and its Ministry." London: Hodder & Stoughton.

"IT seems to be an axiom with many commentators that the prophetic Scriptures never mean precisely what they say; and the same license which is deemed legitimate in interpreting Scripture is used also when the facts of history are adduced as the fulfilment of it. In contrast with this, the language of the prophecies, save where it is avowedly symbolic, is here accepted as unreservedly as though the subject were a statute or a deed, and all theorising in respect of history is studiously avoided."

These are the first two sentences in Dr. Anderson's book. We read them with a glow of satisfaction, feeling certain that if he kept to his keynote, a work of rare excellence had come to our hands. The legal acumen which tests documents, examines witnesses, and with surprising accuracy fixes dates, was never better employed than in the composition of this invaluable work. The learned writer has, by a chain of evidences which only an able lawyer could have thought of, set at rest—so at least we think—questions about the great prophetic epochs of Daniel which have exercised the theologians time out of mind. Incisive in style, logical in thought, reverent in spirit, conclusive in argument, this book has strengthened and deepened our convictions respecting the testimony which intelligent believers should bear, in these days, about the second advent of Christ, and the uprising of the evil Prince who will challenge His right to the throne. Dr. Anderson, we thank you heartily for this book!

The New Cyclopædia of Illustrative Anecdote, Moral and Religious. Stock.

THIS work, issuing in monthly parts at threepence, is likely to be a help to teachers and speakers who wish to point a moral or enforce a doctrine by a striking fact. "The authenticity of the anecdotes" is, of course, a great recommendation; for manufactured anecdotes are the quackery of oratory. Apart from this, the book is pleasant reading when you wish to avoid hard thinking.

Man's Only Hope of Immortality: An Exposition of Christ's Argument against the Sadducees. By WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF. London: Ontario; Montreal: *Investigator* office.

IN this pamphlet Mr. Moncrieff—a veteran in the cause of truth, and who has, therefore, had to pay for it—has rendered good service. We hope ere long, assuming his consent, to place before our readers his clear, logical, and convincing argument.

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The Tone and Teaching of the New Testament on Certainty in Religion: Being the Merchants' Lecture for October, 1880. By EDWARD WHITE. London: Elliot Stock.

THESE four able and elaborate Lectures deal with the tone of the New Testament on certainty in religion, as to miracles, as to doctrine, and as to personal salvation. The little book is a contribution to sound speech on matters of vital importance.

The House of Cromwell, and the Story of Dunkirk. By JAMES WAYLEN. London: Chapman and Hall.

"THE following pages are primarily designed to contain genealogical tables of the Protector Oliver's descendants to the present day, and thus to carry down through another century the family history which terminated in 1785 with the publication of Mark Noble's 'History of the Protectoral House.' Other miscellaneous matter is added, illustrative of the Protector's character, all which will speak for itself. But the mention of more than a hundred letters, as supplementary to Mr. Carlyle's collection of the Protector's 'Letters and Speeches,' claims a few preliminary observations."—*Preface.*

And Mr. Waylen, with loving perseverance, has sought out and set in order a great number of interesting facts concerning the great Englishman. Genealogical trees are a forest in which we never enter because of the certainty of losing our way. Somebody has said, "Happy is the nation that has no history." We say, Happy is the man who has no ancestors! He is saved a deal of trouble; feels that he is only a poor little atom amongst the millions; and, when questioned about his parentage can settle the matter as Topsy did—"'Specs I growed." But Mr. Waylen is a first-rate ranger. He knows every tree in the forest, every branch, every leaf! His minuteness of search is marvellous; and, while his book reads like a romance, it supplies a link in the history of our country which no future historian of England can dispense with.

Garden Graith: or Talks among My Flowers. By SARAH F. SMILEY. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

A CHARMING book, rich in thought, beautiful in style, loving in spirit, and true in doctrine. Miss Smiley has rare gifts. Her *Garden* at Saratoga Springs will surely become an attraction to travellers. Her book has made us long for a country cottage and garden, instead of the wilderness of bricks around us. We could not lay the volume aside until there was no more to read, and then we wished for more; and this, we candidly confess, is a rare thing with us, for we find but few books that we care to read through.

The Mission of Elijah to Restore All-Israel previous to Our Lord's Second Advent. By the late JOHN WILSON. Second Edition. Revised and Annotated. London: James Nisbet & Co.

JOHN WILSON, whom we knew and loved, is no longer amongst us. He sleeps in Christ; but his memory is fragrant, and his remarkably original works, "Our Israelitish Origin," and "The Mission of Elijah," live after him, and are now in far greater demand than they were in his lifetime. This is the story of all true teachers. Neglected, they fight the battle and die; and then it is discovered that

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they were prophets of God. Mr. Wilson's highly accomplished daughter is the true representative of his ideas, and is also a laborious student in this field of holy lore. "The Mission of Elijah" deserves the attention of all devout and thoughtful men.

NOTICES.

"M. K."—Your request for "a sermon frequently in the RAINBOW" is also the request of many friends, and—strength continued—I mean to comply. "The Gospel of the Resurrection" in this number is a consequence of these kind wishes."

"W. R." writes thus: "While I write my heart so overflows with gratitude to the Father of mercies that language fails to express the value of the Magazine to me. What you have seen or known respecting the good it has done is as nothing to the future. Triumphant victory will for ever crown the truth."

"W. M." says: "The RAINBOW comes to us monthly laden with the choicest food the heart can desire. It is our meat and drink. It has been the means of opening our eyes to the marvellous love of God to men. We appreciate it very much, therefore, as an advocate of the sublime truths of the Gospel."

"A. A." See the answer to "M. K." You wish "a sermon monthly from the Editor's pen." I am very willing, especially as you say that this is your only religious teacher, all the preachers of your town "taking delight in heathen horrors which libel the character of God." Well, then, set to work and get new subscribers! A town of 10,000 inhabitants should at least take fifty copies of the RAINBOW. Try to introduce that very modest number, and the effect upon pulpits and pews will be very beneficial in a short time.

"A. W." writes: "I must thank you heartily for the bright light you have thrown on 'the cloud of witnesses.' What a suggestive thing for practical testimony,—that men witnessing *for* God are themselves watched *by* the world! It reminds me of many scriptures, of which 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13, is a specimen, 'Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. . . . Christ Jesus, before Pontius Pilate, witnessed a good confession.' Animated by the example of our heroic predecessors in the faith, let us be brave for truth though the spectators of our faithfulness call us fools!"

"E. B." writes: "Your paper on the cloud of witnesses inspires me with courage. It is my lot to contend before gainsayers, and your remarks reminded me of a passage which, among others, you might have quoted in illustration of your argument:—'Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus' (Acts iv. 13). They witnessed for their great Master, and the Jewish rulers saw and heard them with astonishment."

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

MARCH, 1881.

REVELATION AND ITS EVIDENCES. *

No. 3.

HAVING in our last paper spoken of Romish miracles generally in their contrast with those of Scripture, we would in this bring forward, with the same purpose of comparison, some selected instances of the best attested and most remarkable of those miracles. We are sorry that Mill did not himself make any selection of the kind. But no admirer of Mill or his writings can object to our taking, as among such, the cases specially selected by David Hume the historian; for the very same purpose for which Mill referred to Romish miracles in general, viz., that we have for them equal or superior testimony to that possessed for the miracles of Scripture, and that if we reject the former as not entitled to credence, we are also equally bound to reject the latter.

We may be very sure that so well-informed, acute, and determined an enemy of Christianity as Hume unhappily was, would make the best selection in his power. He hated Christianity. He sneered at it. He was determined to put it out of the power of any reasonable man to give any credit to the main internal evidence on which it must ever rest, viz., that of miracle. He would, accordingly, in his selection of cases of alleged miracle to parallel with those of Scripture, be most careful to select the best that lay to hand; and we may therefore be sure that those which he has chosen from the miraculous legends of the modern Church of Rome are the very best that could be chosen, at least up to his time. If any more recent ones should be advanced as superior to Hume's in any respect, it becomes the opponents of Scriptural miracle to bring them forward for examination.

In selecting his instances Hume has shown great wisdom. Two things, as every one will readily see, were chiefly to be regarded.

* Three Essays on Religion. By JOHN STUART MILL. London: Longmans, 1874.

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The first of these is, that the alleged wonder should, if true, be entitled to be called a miracle. Hence it should be beyond human means, or the spontaneous agencies of nature. The second thing was that it should be sustained by evidence equal or superior to that which attests the miracles of Scripture. To meet the first requirement, it will be seen that Hume avoids large and common classes of alleged Romish miracles. Hence, he does not bring us to Naples to witness the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius. Nor does he introduce us to any relics dropping blood, or pictures or images in churches moving any portion of themselves or speaking. He knew that human means were quite sufficient to account for all such marvels, and that consequently no amount of evidence could be sufficient; for, though it might indubitably prove a fact, yet the fact might not be miraculous after all. Hume therefore selects two cases which seemed to him, in their nature, as truly miraculous as any which the legends of the Church of Rome could produce, and of these it may be remarked that they bear in some respects a strong resemblance to Scriptural miracles in their general character. No others could for a moment be advanced.

The first of these is a story related by Cardinal de Retz. * The Cardinal came to Saragossa, the capital of Arragon in Spain. In the cathedral of that city he was shown a man who, when the Cardinal saw him, had two legs like any other man. He was assured by the canons of the cathedral and by many others, that for seven years previously that man served the office of a doorkeeper of the cathedral, and that throughout those seven years he was seen by every one to have had only one leg. Holy oil, he was told, had been rubbed to the stump, and he subsequently gained the second leg. All the townspeople believed that a wonderful miracle had been wrought; but Cardinal de Retz, while he narrated the event as he was told it, believed what Hume himself believed of it, that the affair from first to last was *a holy fraud*, i.e., a thing got up by some of the clergy of the cathedral for the purpose of imposing upon the credulity of the people, and thereby gaining credit and wealth for themselves and their church.

Now it is to be remarked of this whole marvel that the only account that we have of it is that given by the Cardinal, and that he, after being told the entire affair, and after having seen the man, and heard all that was said of him, had no doubt whatsoever that the matter was nothing else but a holy fraud or pious trick. The man who tells us the story, and who had the opportunity of judging of it, pronounced it a cheat. What is meant by this? It is simply this, that Cardinal de Retz believed that some one or more of the ecclesiastics of the cathedral had induced this man seven years previously to put on the appearance of having but one leg for the purpose of afterwards exhibiting him with two, and thereby gaining

* Essays by David Hume. Dublin: Williams, 1779. Vol. ii. p. 131.

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the credit of a miracle. The Cardinal must have hence supposed that there was no impossibility of the man's having put on the appearance he exhibited, which indeed we know from experience is not at all impossible. He had two legs when the Cardinal saw him. The Cardinal believed he had two legs for the seven previous years just as well, but that by some trick he had appeared to have but one. Whatever was the means used for this purpose, Cardinal de Retz thought it quite a feasible thing; and, therefore, we have his judgment (the only one we can have) that it was quite possible for a cunning fellow, backed up by cunning coadjutors, to put on all the appearance which convinced beholders that he was only possessed of one leg. This is of the utmost importance to remember. He was generally believed to have but one. Could he have counterfeited this appearance so as to produce a general deception? The only narrator of the matter, who, from his acuteness and his information obtained on the spot was perfectly capable of judging this, thought it was quite possible for him to have put on whatever produced the belief on the part of the town's-folk. It is therefore our part, who know nothing otherwise of the matter, to believe that during the famous seven years the man presented an appearance which it was quite possible for a man with two good legs to put on. Cardinal de Retz himself takes the case out of the rank of miracle, and therefore our only reasonable way is to accept it as De Retz accepted it—as a holy fraud. The Cardinal thought it was all capable of being counterfeited, and that it was counterfeited; and therefore we, who only know what the Cardinal tells us, are obliged with him to believe that the case was capable of being counterfeited, and was counterfeited. Human means, according to him, did the whole matter, and we must accept his opinion, and set it down to human means. And so we have nothing to say to the matter at all *as miracle*.

The difficulty of counterfeiting the appearance of having but one leg got over, by means of the Cardinal himself, every other difficulty is also, with his aid, readily surmounted. He knew intimately the character of the ecclesiastics of his day, and judged them fully capable of committing a fraud for an end judged good by them. He also judged that they would think it well worth their while to counterfeit a matter of the kind for seven years for the sake of the credit they would gain at the end. It was by no means necessary that all the cathedral Canons, or even any considerable portion of them, should be acquainted with the pious lie. He also thought that the parties to whom the miracle was to be proposed were parties who would either most readily accept a pious fraud of the kind, or who would not dare, if they suspected or rejected it, to make any awkward inquiries touching it. Nor would they. The greater number would think it a sin to doubt of what was told them by the clergy of the cathedral. None would dare to make the smallest inquiry, no matter what his secret feelings. Neither

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clergy nor people dared to express a doubt. The prison of the Inquisition and the fire of the *auto da fè* were ready for them if they did. The getters up of the plot had only seven years to account for. No one seems to have known anything of the man until seven years before he appeared as a doorkeeper of the cathedral! A man with one leg was a curious party to appoint to the office! Whence did he come? No one knew. If any wished to know after he was paraded as cured, no one dared to inquire. It would be throwing doubt upon the truth of the directors of religious faith, and to doubt them was to sin, and to sin by doubting them was to qualify one's self for a spectacle in which the doubter was to burn while the doubted set fire to the pile.

If we will for a moment compare some of the more remarkable miracles of the New Testament with this "holy fraud" recorded by Cardinal de Retz, and cried up by Hume and his admirer Mill as more than capable of comparison with them, we will see how wholly unlike they are. Let us, for this purpose, turn to the miracle recorded in the third chapter of Acts, the healing of the lame man at the gate of the Temple by Peter and John. With the one resemblance that De Retz's wonder was performed in the cathedral church of Saragossa, and Luke's within the precincts of the great Temple of Jerusalem, the two events are utterly dissimilar.

Their very resemblance in this one respect, in fact, produces a contrariety of the most important kind. The Spanish doorkeeper was in the power and hands of the parties interested in the alleged cure. The Jewish beggar at the gate of the Temple was in the very citadel of the parties most opposed to the miracle. The Spaniard was only known as apparently possessed of one leg for a period of seven years. Of his antecedents up to this period nothing is related. There was no liberty accorded of tracing him farther back, and ascertaining in what condition he was before he appeared before the devout of Saragossa as one of the doorkeepers of their cathedral. The Jewish beggar was known from his birth, and known from his birth to have been so incapable of motion that he was carried to the place where he begged for alms. The appearance of the Spaniard, of whatever kind it was during his seven years of probation, was judged by De Retz to have been capable of being counterfeited. The appearance of the Jew was incapable of being pretended. We are not told that the alleged miracle on the Spaniard was performed in the sight of any of the town's people, nor are we told in whose presence it was wrought. That on the Jew was wrought in the most public place of Jerusalem, before a multitude of spectators. The privacy of the cathedral of Saragossa within whose recesses we may assume the marvel to have been wrought, would afford abundant room for skilful manipulation. The publicity of the Temple gate would allow of none. The canons of Saragossa were men who would think it a merit in God's eyes to palm off a fraud which would exalt their religion. The apostles of

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Christ have never been charged with opinions of such a kind. The parties in Spain before whom the doorkeeper was exhibited, had been trained to think it a sin to doubt the reality of anything whatsoever which their bishops and clergy presented to them as truth. Even to inquire into it would be sin. If any did doubt they would keep their doubts to themselves. To whisper them to their neighbours would be to open the doors of the prison of the Inquisition, from whence escape, save in the shape of a cruel death, was difficult. The spectators, and those informed of the healing of the Jewish beggar, were none of them trained to think it a sin to doubt, to inquire into, to reject, anything alleged to have been performed by such men as Peter and John. Many of them were most deeply interested in exposing these men to their fellow-citizens as impostors, and fully capable, from their rank, influence, and training, to expose them if they were vain pretenders. Not only were they capable of conducting the inquiry, but they did inquire upon the spot. Imprisonment or the stake would have been the reward of any one who would expose, or seek to expose, the wonder of the cathedral canons. Reward and honour would have been bestowed upon any who could show that the apostles of Jesus Christ were deceiving the people. Every circumstance, in fact, in the two cases is dissimilar, and in favour of the miracle recorded in Acts. We can admit all that the Cardinal tells us of the doorkeeper, viz., that he had two legs when he saw him, that for seven previous years he had appeared in public to have had but one, that he had been rubbed with holy oil, and that subsequently to this rubbing, he came forth before the town's-people walking on two legs—we can admit all this, and yet, with De Retz, set it all down as no miracle, but a holy fraud; but we cannot admit the circumstances of the case as related in the Acts without at the same time admitting that the work was a miracle, as much beyond human means as beyond the spontaneous agencies of nature to perform.

We will now turn to the second case selected by Hume from the miraculous legends of Rome, and see how it stands comparison with those of the New Testament. It is the case of the miracles said to have been wrought in France at the tomb of the Abbé Paris in the last century. *

Now in speaking of these works we are free to confess that we believe there is a vast deal more of reality about them than belongs to the healing of the doorkeeper of De Retz. That we regard simply as a "holy fraud;" these we do not. We readily accept it that of those Jansenist priests and followers who regarded the Abbé Paris with veneration, most, in all probability, were not guilty of any conscious deception. We will also admit that, of the cures asserted to have been wrought at the tomb of the Abbé, a very large proportion were really wrought much as they are said to

* Essays by DAVID HUME. "On Miracles." Vol. ii.

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have been wrought. With these admissions, we will examine the case as stated by Hume, and taught in the Jansenist Records.

It is said, then, that, attracted by faith in the power said to be put forth at the tomb of the Abbé, multitudes of sick folk flocked to the tomb in expectation of a cure. All around them were animated by the same deep feelings of faith and hope. Every one was persuaded that forth from that tomb, where the sainted man lay in death, could come forth a power able to cure them of their sickness of whatever kind it was. Of the multitudes of sick folk who thus flocked to the tomb, *some* were said to have been healed. We are not told what proportion were said to be cured, and what proportion went away no better than they came. As this is not told us, we are warranted in concluding, what few probably will dream of disputing, that the proportion of those said to be cured was small in proportion to those allowed not to have been cured. The alleged cases of cure would naturally be magnified and dwelt upon, while the multitude of poor folk who carried back with them to their homes their various ailments unmitigated, would be passed over in silence. Things of the kind related at the tomb of the Abbé Paris take place at many reputed holy places in the Roman world, and such is their general history. A few cures, real or pretended, are cried up with rumour's thousand tongues. Many failures are wholly passed by in fame. These only carry their tale of sorrow to individual homes.

But while some only out of a greater number are reported as having been healed, of those who are reported as healed there are no well-authenticated instances of individual cures which can compare with the more remarkable and more prominent miracles of the New Testament. There is, for example, no instance of any one having been raised from the dead. While sight is said to have been, in some cases, given to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, there is on record no case which can be paralleled with such cases as that of Christ giving sight to a man born blind, or Peter giving the perfect power of motion to a man of forty who had been a cripple from the time of birth. That is, we find in these works performed at the tomb of the abbé that they do not come necessarily within the class of *miracle*.

Let us repeat what miracle is. A miracle is a fact not within the possibility of having been brought about by human means, or by the spontaneous agencies of nature as experienced by mankind. It is of the utmost value to have well in our mind the true nature of a miracle. If we have not this in mind, we are only bandying arguments about meaningless words. But with this definition of miracle, which is Mill's own definition of it with a slight addition, which has in the present case no effect one way or other, we will be able at once to see that much, if not all, of what was asserted to have taken place at the abbé's tomb may have taken place, and yet not a solitary miracle have been performed. For, we assert, that

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everything related by Hume as having taken place may have been brought about by the spontaneous agencies of nature as experienced by mankind. This is strictly a case for the physiologist. We defy him to parallel the miracles of Scripture among the records of physiology. We assert that the wonders at the French tomb may be paralleled there.

If many sick persons, attacked with the various ailments of humanity, were all of them at one time healed, we would allow that to be a miracle. We would not require that among those cases there should be any of the resurrection of the dead, or the healing of persons who had been afflicted with their sickness from birth. It would be sufficient if a great number of sick persons brought together at one time, having every variety of malady more or less severe, not a single one went away uncured. Such would be a miracle proper, for the experienced agencies of nature, working through the imagination or otherwise, have never produced such an effect. Scripture records such miracles upon several occasions (Matt. iv. 23, 24; ix. 35; Acts xix. 12). On such occasions it does not, as it so frequently does upon other occasions, go into the circumstances of particular cases. This was not required. The healing of every case of sickness of every kind at one and the same time, was as truly miracle as a single case of the most noted miracle such as a resurrection from the dead. Now, in this respect the works wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris fail to come necessarily under the class of miracle, for on no occasion is it pretended that a great number of persons variously affected were, without exception, healed. The spontaneous agencies of nature can readily account for the healing of some sicknesses of certain kinds among a multitude of others not healed.

But when *individual cases* are appealed to as miracle, we must be exceedingly particular. We must be able to judge fully about them. Not only must the testimony be excellent, but the case itself must be one which, if matter of fact, is certainly miracle. Scripture presents abundant such cases. The resurrection of a dead person to life, if it happened, is a miracle beyond a doubt. So is the cure, with a little spittle and clay, of a man born blind. So is the healing, by a few words, of a man of forty who was born a cripple. We need not have a great many such cases, but when appeal is made to individual cases, we must have some. We have them in Scripture. We have the case itself and the testimony to it. If the testimony is true, the case is a miracle.

Now, what we say of the cures at the tomb of the French priest is, that no one case specially referred to equals or approaches the more prominent miracles of the New Testament. We have not ourselves examined them, but we take our impression of them from Hume's general statement. He examined them, of course, when he composed his celebrated "Essay on Miracles," and we presume would have brought forth individual cases to parallel with those of

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Scripture if he could have found them, just as he has selected from heathen miracles the reputed healing of a blind man by Vespasian in Alexandria. As he has not done so, we infer that he saw none such among the records. They would fail of comparison in some essential respect. Either the antecedents of the person said to be healed were wholly unknown, or his actual condition of body, when he came from a distance to a place where no one knew him, was not understood; or the cure was one which it was within the power of a sympathetic imagination to mitigate, or to cure completely.

It is quite plain to the most casual inquirer into this subject that, in such a case as we are now speaking of, the most extraordinary facilities exist for imposition and credulity to build up an apparently very strong case, which had no possible existence in the case of the miracles of Scripture.

When Christ raised the widow's son at Nain, or Lazarus at Bethany, all the people of those towns knew all the circumstances of the widow's son and of Lazarus. So when Peter raised Tabitha at Joppa, or healed Æneas at Lydda, the people of Joppa and Lydda knew all about them (Acts ix. 33-42). And such was the character of all the more prominent miracles of Scripture. The worker of the miracle came to the place where the subject of the miracle dwelt, and where all his antecedents and circumstances were thoroughly known, and there performed the cure. The person cured remained there with all those who had known him before and after the cure. The most complete means existed of ascertaining if there had been any deception, or fraud, or mistake on the part of the worker or subject of the miracle. But all this is changed when we come to a case where people from every part of a country, far and near, come to a place to be healed. Most of them are, and must be, utterly unknown at the place by the parties to whom they may specially address themselves, and by the persons by whom they are surrounded. Most of them probably come to be healed of something; but they may exaggerate their case most materially. In a place and a time when to be healed was a triumph to an influential cause, it is quite possible that some did not come to be healed but to appear to have been healed by the wonder-working power of the place. Such things have been; and the circumstance that many came from a distance to persons by whom they were utterly unknown, but by whom a miracle would be most rapturously hailed, would afford the utmost facility to cases of the kind. And it is for these reasons that we say that the individual and alleged miracles at the tomb of the Abbé Paris come altogether short. They cannot be ranked as miracle. They were within the power of the spontaneous agencies of nature, or they did not, from the circumstances of the case, receive sufficient attestation. To all this it must be added that they were utterly rejected as miraculous by the Jesuits and their adherents, and that the belief in them so utterly failed that in no long time subsequent the Jansenist party

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was utterly put down. We do not think the Jansenist party to have been exempt from that pernicious doctrine of Rome, that the end justifies the means. They had what seemed to them a most important end to gain. It is quite possible that Jansenist piety may have mingled up a little fraud in the composition of their miracle. At all events, the French Church declined to accept the alleged works at the tomb as miracle, and so gives the most powerful confirmation to all that we have said about them.

Having disposed of Mill's comparison of the miracles of Scripture with those of the modern Church of Rome, we now proceed to his next objection, to the credibility of the Gospel miracles. It is this: that the eye-witnesses to those miracles were "moved by a union of the strongest motives which can inspire human beings to persuade, first themselves, and then others, that what they had seen was a miracle" (239).

We would wish much that Mill had told us what were the motives which could urge the apostles and other eye-witnesses to persuade *themselves, contrary to fact,* that certain works which either their Master or they are alleged to have performed, were miracles. He has, however, done nothing of the kind. He has made a strong general assertion, but has not attempted to substantiate it. We will then make bold to say that the direct opposite to Mill's statement is the actual state of things, and that the eye-witnesses of whom he speaks were urged by a union of the very strongest motives which could influence them to scrutinize most jealously the character of the works they witnessed, and not to admit them to be miracles unless they had the fullest and amplest means of knowing them to be such. We say, moreover, that such were the circumstances of those eye-witnesses that, even if they were fully persuaded of the reality of the miracles, they had still the very strongest temptations that can actuate the human mind to keep their convictions to themselves, and not to go forward in the face of the world to give that testimony which they certainly gave. It was only the most thorough conviction of the reality and truth of the miracles, united to a deep sense of consequent responsibility to God and an honest mind, which could make them take the course which they did. We do not deny—we do not want to deny—that *with such conviction and feeling,* they had a personal interest in their own faith, and a personal interest in persuading others of its truth. But their interest all lay *in another life.* The basis and stay of that interest all rested upon the truth of the miracles. If they were not true, they had the strongest reasons for rejecting them whether as regards this life or that which is to come.

The only possible worldly object which can be supposed to have influenced Jesus Christ and His apostles to induce belief in His claims—supposing those claims not to have been well founded—was the ambition of setting up a religion of which they should be the heads. We do not deny that such a motive has much power

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with some minds, but we do say that of all the people in the world the idea of setting up a religion could least have entered into the minds of Christ and His first followers, if they really had not supernatural power working with them. It is priests, philosophers, statesmen, who conceive such projects, and conceive them because they would conduce to their worldly advantage, and because they have, from their circumstances and their position, some fair prospect of inducing belief in that which they propound. But the notion of an illiterate young carpenter, with no knowledge beyond his trade, and no skill beyond that of plane and compass, going forth at the head of a dozen illiterate men who had no knowledge beyond that required for collecting taxes, or catching fish in the Sea of Galilee, for the purpose of making war against all the established religions of the world, and changing the faith of mankind, is of all ideas the most supremely absurd. To entertain any hope of succeeding—supposing the claim to miraculous power unfounded—they must have been a parcel of silly, half-crazy enthusiasts! Cervantes' picture of Don Quixote going forth with Sancho Panza to redress the wrongs of man and woman, with no other means than his own lean horse and his ancient spear, does not present so utterly ridiculous an idea as the carpenter of Nazareth at the head of his publicans and fishermen going forth on a religious crusade against priesthoods, and philosophers, and peoples, and established systems, with no other reliance than upon a supernatural aid which really was not present. Cervantes does not send forth his hero on his mission until he is fairly mad, and the only attendant he can procure for him is a very simple dependent who had looked up to his master as the wisest of men, and whose greed, coupled with most astonishing ignorance, led him to expect some substantial benefit in this world for following him through the mountains of Spain. And yet, even Sancho, despite his supposed worldly interest, soon looks upon his master as half mad; and most assuredly, if the knight had been slain in any of the encounters he met with, we should never have seen the squire donning his armour and mounting his horse, and going forth to persuade the Spanish mind to that which his master had failed to persuade it to.

The comparison may appear light, but it is not so. We say that if Jesus Christ was really devoid of miraculous power, He must have been as crazy as Don Quixote in attempting what He did. We say that if He had no power beyond that of a carpenter, His apostles must have been as simple and ignorant as Sancho Panza to attend Him in His peregrinations. We say that as surely as the famous squire soon began to suspect the rhapsodies of his master, so the fishermen and others who attended Christ would very soon begin to suspect that the idea of Messiahship was a craze. We say that with the same certainty that Cervantes' squire would have returned to his village without taking up the profession of knighthood if his master had been slain by the wings of the windmill, so

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would the apostles have returned to and remained at their old occupations on their Master's crucifixion if He were only a mad enthusiast. We say that if His claims to supernatural power were as unfounded as those of Cervantes' knight to be the divinely appointed redresser of all wrongs, He would have failed as completely to impress the human mind with faith in His claims as Don Quixote failed to impress that of Spain in Cervantes' famous romance. Supposing the miracles of Jesus Christ not to have been really wrought, or to have been only ordinary works within the power of man or nature to perform, let us ask ourselves what possible motives they could have had to persuade themselves to the contrary? What motives could they have had in this life? None, unless it is a motive to a line of conduct to gain thereby persecution, poverty, or death! What motives could they have had in a future life? None; but the very strongest the other way. They could not hope that advocating the cause of a deceiver could win them anything good in a life to come.

If, indeed, their Master's claims were true—and to be true they must have rested on the reality of that miraculous power to which they bore witness—in that case we fully admit, nay, we must strongly insist, that they had the strongest motives both to believe in Him themselves and to persuade others to do the same. But those motives had reference to *another life*. Here they were to expect their Master's treatment. In the life to come, indeed, glorious visions were opened out to them. A new heavens and a new earth were their expectation. An everlasting life was their faith, in which to enjoy their portion with Christ. A sense of duty, a sense of love for God and for the souls of their fellows, would lead them to propagate their own faith. But all this rested absolutely upon *the reality of that miraculous power* to which they bore witness. If it were real, they had the strongest motives to be its bold and constant witnesses. If it were not real,—if there were the smallest grounds for rejecting it—none were so deeply interested as they in discovering its falsehood. And yet these were the men who bore a lifelong testimony to the miracles of Christ.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument Against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

THE NARRATIVE.

THE conversation, or discussion, between our Lord and the Sadducees is recorded by the first three Evangelists only, and while the respective narrations are substantially the same, slight

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variations may be detected in the reports. The most important differences from Luke are appended to his text, quoted below, in order to present the historic incident in its complete form by a collated exhibition of the whole particulars.

Luke xx. 27-38—"There came to Him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked Him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. (Matt. xx. 28—"Whose wife shall she be of the seven?" Mark xii. 23—"Whose wife shall she be of them?") And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage. (Matt. xxii. 29—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Mark xii. 24—"Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scripture, neither the power of God?") But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Matt. xxii. 30—"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Mark xii. 25—"For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.") Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him." (Matt. xxii. 31—"But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you, by God, saying (v. 32), I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Mark xii. 26—same as Matt., except that instead of "touching the resurrection of the dead," it is—"touching the dead, that they rise." Ver. 27—He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.")

For the sake of distinctness and perspicuity, let us divide the narrative under the following heads: first, The Sadducees and their opinions; second, The question they proposed to our Lord; and third, His reply to their question, which was partly (1) *authoritative*, and partly (2) *argumentative*.

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I.—The Sadducees and their Opinions.

As the Christian church in our day has resolved itself into a diversity of sects, so was it with the Jewish at the dawn of what is commonly known as the New Dispensation. None of them, however, are mentioned in the more ancient Scriptures, because they all sprang into existence during the 400 years which intervened between the close of that volume and the commencement of the Gospel era. The leading Hebrew sects were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes; besides these there was another division, the Herodiens, essentially political in its character, the members being partisans of the infamous Herodian house, truckling courtiers of the world, about which nothing more need be said on this occasion. As to numbers, the first and second far exceeded the third, that of the Essenes, composed of monks, spending their simple and contemplative lives in retirement. The Sadducees, in the matter of adherents, were inferior on the census roll to the Pharisees—the really dominant and most pretentious order of the day. Our concern at present is with the Sadducees; and what is known of them may be presented in a few lines. "They are supposed," says Barnes, the commentator, in animadverting on Matthew, 3rd chapter, "to have taken their name from Sadock, who flourished about 260 years before the Christian era. He was a pupil of Antigonus Sochaeus, president of the Sanhedrim, or Great Council of the nation. He had taught the duty of serving God *disinterestedly*, without the hope of reward or fear of punishment. Sadock, not properly understanding the doctrine of his master, drew the inference that there was no future state of rewards or punishments; and on this belief founded the sect." Now whether the disciple understood or misunderstood his master's teaching is a matter of little importance; the sect entertained the dogma imputed to it, as we discover from a source that leaves no room for doubt. That source is the New Testament. They excluded a resurrection from their confession, as is shown in the narrative before us; and according to Acts xxiii. 8, they were sceptical not merely as to that, but also on the existence of angels and spirits.

What distinction is to be drawn between "angel" and "spirit" in the historical passage in Acts is by no means obvious. "Spirit," one of the rejected articles of faith, is not defined by any such word as *human*, which would have removed the difficulty at once. But there is no qualifying term, and it would be rash and hazardous to place the one just mentioned before the noun "spirit," though many English readers will, as it were instinctively, supply it in a moment. This thing is somewhat apparent from the next verse, that the beings represented by "spirit" were, to the mind of the scribes, who attached themselves to the Pharisees' "part," not necessarily bad, and that they were even employed on God's errands, like the angels; since, alluding to Paul, they say: "if a *spirit* or

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an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God;" that is, by resisting the prisoner's testimony. At any rate, they seem to have viewed the spirits referred to in their Council in this way; though of necessity what they believed on that or on any other subject has from their authority alone no claim upon our faith. Nor do we refuse to admit a distinction between "angel" and "spirit," for the inspired writer teaches us to distinguish them, by explaining the creed of the Sadducees thus: "The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both" (Acts xxiii. 8). The Pharisees, then, were not to be blamed for accepting testimony regarding what seems to be a second class of extra-mundane existences; and yet they may have erred, and we suspect did greatly err, in maintaining that the voice of any "spirit," distinguishing that order from the angelic, was entitled to reverence, in virtue of its being a message from Heaven; as angelic communications were justly and ever held to be. In that case there would be introduced a distinction without a difference, for both would be messengers in God's service, in other words, His angels, and both would by right insist on obedience to their instructions. Now the speakers on this occasion might have known better than that supposes, and still have believed in the two orders of supernatural beings in a more Scriptural manner; that is to say, they might have understood the *character* and *functions* of the two classes of invisible agents more properly. And why do we say so? Because the Jewish Bible, as all are aware, contains manifold references to both; and does not the New Testament assure us that when the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, the unseen spirits of evil—powers of darkness, demons, principalities, with Satan, god of this world, prince and power of the air, as their chief—put forth strenuous and malignant exertions to defeat His mission? However, be the distinction what it may, we are safe in accepting this as the doctrine of the Sadducees, they believed in the existence of neither "angel" nor "spirit," good or bad; agent or antagonist of the Divine Will.

And now we return to their view of man and of death. Substantially, then, they held by the unity of individual man; at all events, their faith amounted to this, that *nothing* survived the crushing blow of death. According to their conception, the drama of life ended in a sleep, an eternal sleep. In another's language, they "looked into the abyss without trembling. There is no phantom there! There is neither angel, spirit, nor life to come."

Why did they conclude that each little human history was everlastingly closed when the heart ceased to throb? Perhaps—and we can use no positive language—perhaps, being what may be called the free-thinking philosophical party of the day, death was regarded by them as a perpetual slumber by the ordination of nature; or it may be some of the more serious amongst them, knowing the penalty of sin to be death, as it is written, "the soul

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that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 20), and discerning no efficacious provision, for there could be none, in the observances imposed on Hebrew worshippers, to cleanse the conscience or obtain pardon of moral guilt, assumed that none was foreshadowed by their complex system of ordinances, none contemplated in the counsels of Heaven, and so advanced with resignation or indifference to their fate, death, without hope of ultimate reanimation. Their conclusion as to death being inevitably eternal, was wrong; yet, if they explained their sacrificial rites to themselves in that way, the view so far was correct, but only so far. "The law"—ceremonial—"made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" (Heb. vii. 19). "The first tabernacle . . . was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience," that is, cleansing the adoring attendant at the altar from spiritual defilement. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by HIS OWN BLOOD, He entered in once into the holy place, having OBTANIED ETERNAL REDEMPTION for us" (Heb. ix. 8, 9, 12).

There is some reason to think they went so far as to assert that life and sensibility not only never would, but never could, be restored. Be that as it may, they contended for this at all events, that when dead a man was in the most complete or absolute sense as if he had never breathed; and that the long night of insensibility would never *never* be disturbed in any instance by a resurrection to intelligent consciousness; in a word, that the doctrine of a future state of existence was a bubble and a dream.

Though professing these tenets, justice requires the acknowledgment that they were not avowed infidels, as we understand the word. On the contrary, they held their Bible in professedly devout esteem, having special regard for the writings of Moses. Jesus does not charge them, and at no time are they charged, with rebellion against the supreme authority of Holy Writ. Our Lord addresses them in this manner: "Ye do err, not knowing,"—not understanding—"the Scriptures." Strange as it may appear to us, with not a particle of faith in an after world, content to be only the heirs of time, they were nevertheless a religious party, and it was not unusual for members of their sect to occupy the highest positions in the church. In Acts v. 17, 18, we are informed,—"Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the Apostles, and put them in the common prison." And not merely were dignified ecclesiastics numbered among them, but according to Horne in his "Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures," (vol. ii., p. 197), "the Sadducean error prevailed among the principal men both of rank and learning in those days;" the days when Christianity first began to be promulgated. Here, then, were members of the Sanhedrim, or

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National Council, and officials in the Jewish Church who wore the most sacred vestments; here were very grave and learned citizens, holding by the Bible of their age, and wisely doing so, yet in some respects lamentably ignorant of its contents. Jesus Christ says so, and to us His testimony is final.

But not satisfied with holding their own opinions in peace, they were amongst the most inveterate persecutors of the Gospel; and the reason of their hostility is not difficult to find. The testimony from the Acts, quoted a few lines above, establishes this charge. So does Matt. xvi. 1—"The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired Him that He would show them a sign from heaven;" likewise Acts iv. 1, 3,—"And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the *resurrection* from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day." This grief, we suspect, was very much akin to the "indignation" mentioned in the 5th chapter, already transcribed, and the arresting of the speakers as evil-doers shows very distinctly the temper of the zealots who deemed their own opinions so far above suspicion and dispute. No wonder they were angry, taking frail humanity as it is. They were ready for cruel deeds against those who preached "the resurrection," and we may suppose had a shower of opprobrious epithets to pour upon their heads, and fiery verbal stimulants wherewith to inflame the passions of the more servile and imbruted adherents of their cause. They would, we may be sure, denounce the innovaters as perverters of the truth, fanatics, dangerous characters, madmen, and deceivers of the people, for whom they were burdened with such a virtuous excess of sympathy. What! a "carpenter's son," a band of "fishermen" from Galilee, who never sat at the feet of a Gamaliel, teach our Doctors! call in question our wisdom! dare to hint that up till now we have misunderstood the Sacred Volume! It was there—deep down into the pride of their hearts—the sharp point of the iron entered, and incensed by the shock and the pain they selected once more the ignoble and cheap defence of persecution.

Of the Sadducees as a class, John, the herald of the Messiah, entertained a low opinion, and he expressed it on one occasion in no gentle terms (Matt. iii. 7), "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers"—malignant and wicked men—"who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Once when they arrived to tempt and snare Him, our Lord spoke words that indicated His knowledge of their character (Matt. xvi. 3, 4), "O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." They were benighted, immoral,

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and insincere. To the Son of God their enmity was unrelenting, and His alarms and Gospel tidings fell on their hardened hearts as powerless as the breeze that strikes a granite cliff.

We must not be so uncharitable as to suppose that their unbelief of a future left every one of them reprobate and vile. There would be—and why should we think otherwise?—many fine specimens of the race amongst them, in spite of their dismal and unrestraining creed,—good fathers, good husbands, good friends, good officials, and good neighbours. Sometimes, we may conjecture, individuals in their ranks may have taken a higher type, and resembled the young man who was so tenderly regarded by the Saviour of the world, but over whom the Divine charm of the Gospel could not be thrown.

Though their future was clouded by despair, they still, be it recollected, had faith in the God of their fathers; and the consciousness of His holy and all-seeing inspection could not but influence their hearts and lives more or less. Their religion, whatever else it inculcated, had made them familiar with His awful name, and with present rewards and present punishments; and that knowledge could not fail to affect their conduct, though nothing beyond the tomb spoke to them of danger or of hope. Many of the Stoics,—"those stoutest apostles of the manliest manhood," according to a distinguished scholar,—like many of the Buddhists in India at a still more ancient date, who regarded this transient scene as the "be-all and the end-all," spent pure and noble lives, and reckoned virtue its own reward, professing even to be satisfied with the meagre terms. And in our day it would be monstrous to affirm that where the true God is equally unknown as in those distant lands and epochs, the order of things is vice, treachery, and open crime. There have been fair spots in every land and in every age, however benighted,—men who, as a great preacher has finely said, "were yet not disobedient to the Eternal Voice speaking in their hearts, and who by means of that lived above their generations, penetrating into the invisible;" and, like Him who loveth righteousness, though it may be ignorant of Christian motives and Christian hope, why should we not frankly acknowledge it, and rejoice over its fruits? "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 35, 36).

A creed similar to that of the Sadducees—nay, a creed of negation more tremendous and dreary—is embraced by many in this boasted epoch of science and civilisation, against whom, on the score of morals and sincerity, it would be shameful to whisper one syllable of reproach. Such characters, in ancient or modern times, are a law unto themselves, and never sink into the slums of vice and debasement, nor brandish the weapons of slander and violence.

But while many of the Sadducees bore, as in fairness we may imagine, an excellent reputation, and were governed by an innate

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force of virtuous restraint, we more than suspect the preponderating mass, who had no fear of God before their eyes, though ready to fight for their traditional opinions and their idolised teachers, found a license for wicked behaviour in the creed of denial in which they were reared. The words of the Baptist, and of the "Master" Himself, lately quoted, are too pregnant with meaning to be explained away. Their guiding maxim was: "Let us eat and drink"—gratify our animal instincts—"for to-morrow we die"—to-morrow, it is done with us for ever! Nothing is to be gained in the future, nothing to be dreaded in its awful depths; and with human nature as it is ordinarily constructed, having a balance so disproportionate between its controlling forces and selfish desires, we can predict, without aspiring to the character of seers, what indulging the animal desires in too many cases would mean.

Such being the moral photograph of the Sadducees, we are unable to avoid the conclusion that when those accustomed to push themselves, or to be pushed, into the foreground, addressed their question to our Lord, they were not without guile. All the evidence conflicts with the supposition that they were really wanting to have a difficulty removed from their minds. The narrative before us, we grant, leaves this uncertain; though, had we seen the airs they assumed, and heard the tone of their speech, and watched the play of their countenances, we might have required no other testimony against them. The proof, however, from other sources is too strong. They came to perplex Jesus—to turn the laugh against Him; and a multitude of spectators being in attendance with open ears, they naturally looked upon it as a choice opportunity to win a triumph at His expense. They knew "a resurrection" formed one of His conspicuous doctrines, and as it struck at the root of Sadducism, they rose full armed to save their system ere it was overthrown and cut in pieces before their eyes.

II.—The Question of the Sadducees.

The narrative on which the question was based need not be repeated, though it ought to be called to mind at this stage of our progress. According to it, the husbands in succession died, and "last of all the woman died also." Already has it been explained that the Sadducees accepted death in the most literal signification of the term, as involving nothing less than a return to perfect insensibility. We do not intermeddle exactly here with the appended notion that this state of non-being was to continue during ceaseless ages. We can make no advance till the words employed in their narration are comprehended; that is, till we understand *their estimate* of death, for thereby we possess the surest guide and only key to the exact and underlying meaning of the question which the domestic story introduces. The same term, *death*, for example, may hold a different idea, as used by one speaker, from what it

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contains or represents when employed by a second. Hence the importance of having language precisely defined, especially in such a momentous interview as the one we are attempting to understand. Let us pursue this thought for a moment longer.

When the Sadducees affirmed the persons alluded to DIED, we have a distinct conception of *their* meaning. But when one educated in the now prevailing opinion informs us a certain individual *is dead*, would not the idea embodied in the phrase be widely different from the Sadducean doctrine? When analysed, it would be resolved partly into *literal* death—that is, of the body; and partly into a liberation—that is, of the soul from the corruptible organism, permitting the mysterious essence, supposed to be the seat of human identity and personality, to remain still conscious of itself, and observant of outward things, pleasant or the reverse. Nay, it would take this vastly heightened significance, that in certain circumstances the soul has departed to the acme of bliss, and in other conditions to the most tragic intensity of woe. Verily, to a Sadducee, a strange picture of death! How different from his own conception, that the man, the soul, has gone down to "Sheol," the abode of silence and night! He had no thought of liberation in his mind. To him, death was expulsion from life in a complete and melancholy sense: and this we gather, not from the word death alone, but from the circumstance of his denying a resurrection; his denying also the existence of angel and spirit, and from accounts of the tenets of the sect furnished by history, quite reliable, though uninspired. Right or wrong, such, without an atom of misrepresentation, was his faith. So you gather that the term DEATH may express your ideas, if you side with the popular theology, and the Sadducean one likewise; and though covered and enclosed by the same word, they are confessedly at a long distance from being identical.

And now we beg to remark, that so far as DEATH is concerned their notion bore a striking resemblance, to say the least of it, to the teaching of the Bible in their possession. A rapid survey of quotations from the Old Testament will make this apparent, and our only request of the reader is patience and candour while they are brought forward.

(*To be continued.*)

THE END OF ALL EVIL.*

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. xxi. 4.

LET me call your attention to the opening chapter of all history, the beginning of the Mosaic cosmography, the revelation which

* A Sermon by the Editor. From the Reporter's manuscript.

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God gave to Moses in order that he might give it to the world. You must have observed that almost every successive act of creative power is followed by this verdict: "And God saw that it was good." Six times that verdict is given; and then the seventh includes them all, thus: "And God saw *everything* that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."

Now, a thinking man must make something out of that. Is it possible, let us ask, before turning to our Scriptural proofs, is it possible that the Almighty and Omniscient Creator could have borne such testimony to His own creative acts separately, and then as an emphatic approval to His creative acts collectively, if He had seen (and He could not but see), that this world, which pleased Him so exceedingly, should be the scene of interminable woe—that man, the grand monarch of all other creatures in the world, should be an immortal sufferer and an immortal sinner? Could He build such a house, knowing that such would be the issue throughout the countless ages of eternity?

Brethren, the question is one of profound importance, and carries its logical issues through the whole thing from beginning to end. Could He see that that splendid dwelling-place, created purposely for the human race, should be the cradle of woe, the home of grief, the sport of devils, the prison-house of endless agony? Could He have made man if He intended that the vast majority of the race should be black and bad as the very Satan that spoiled the paradise where our first parents were placed? I, for one, cannot entertain the thought for a single moment; to my mind it amounts to open blasphemy. "Very good," and yet the devil to triumph, man to be a follower of Satan, law to be a mockery, the Gospel to be rejected, and Christ crucified!

"Christ!" Here we arrive at the grand remedy; this is the name of the glorious One who was to take up this "very good" world and make it vastly better, who was to lay hold of the heart of man and bring him into subjection to the authority of God, and by-and-bye so work out His scheme that one of His apostles in vision should say, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." All tears wiped away, death destroyed, absence of all sorrow, no crying, neither pain for ever. Why? "For the former things are passed away." The intermediate times have gone; the preparatory processes have been completed, and now the issue is before us. There have been two worlds: there will be a third. The first world was that before the flood; it was not destroyed, but renewed by the flood, the material remaining as it was, leaving marks of the great cataclysm which we find in thousands of spots upon the surface and in the crust of the earth to this day. This in which we now dwell, therefore, is the second world; and this world is kept in store for the action of purifying fires—probably only over the surface, so as to purify it—and then there will be the new world. The heavens and the earth which are now are kept in store

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for the purifying and cleansing process, and we look for new heavens and a new earth characterised by this marvellous change: "wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Let me now call your attention to some very important Scriptural facts.

First of all, I should wish you to refer to Matt. xxv. 46, as I have something to say about it which I hope you will ponder well before you reject it. It is a description of what the translators are pleased to call the last judgment; instead of which it is a description of the first judgment, that is to say, the judgment in the commencement of the next dispensation. There have been many days of judgment in the world which are long past, which wound up the then circumstances of the nations or individuals that were involved in them. There was the judgment of the flood, of which men had 120 years' previous warning; that judgment swept away all but a family from the face of the earth, finally doing away with them. And then we have had the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah; their day of judgment is past, long past. We have had the judgments of Babylon and a number of empires and places; these are all past. But this is the first judgment under the present dispensation, or, rather, it takes place at the close of the present dispensation. And what are we told about it? "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

This passage has been quoted ten thousand times in support of the horrible theory of everlasting conscious suffering; it has also been quoted in support of the dogma of universal restoration. Now I shall endeavour to put before you the utter impossibility of either of these things being true. The Greek words translated "everlasting punishment" are κόλασιν αἰώνιον. What do these words mean? I shall tell you presently. But, first of all, let me put before you the great fact that the doctrine of restoration or universalism cannot be based upon this passage, because it has to do only with mortal men, and not men in resurrection life. The King sits upon His throne of glory, and deals judgment to the nations; you know He is expected as King; He shall come as King, and in this parable of the sheep and goats He calls before Him all nations and separates the righteous from the unrighteous; and the righteous shall enter into His glory, and the unrighteous shall enter into punishment. Is there anything analogous to this in the history of the world? Have you ever read of a conqueror calling before him the tribes and the nations that he had conquered and dealing with them thus—bringing the obedient and submissive under his sceptre and putting the rebels to fire and sword? I need not send you back through the world's history for instances of this, for they have been furnished in very recent times. Well, that is the idea; they are going into punishment. What does this word κόλασιν

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mean? It means pruning, punishing. Now the universalists have said that as this word means pruning as well as punishing, these people are to be pruned and thus restored. Just take one of your flower-pots to-morrow and cut off a branch from the plant; what will take place? The branch will die. What will be the effect upon the flower? It will improve it. This process is cutting off the rebellious ones who will not submit to the sceptre of King Messiah; and a double result ensues. First cut off, punish, kill, destroy; and the effect of that is everlasting. The second result is that the loyal nations are vastly improved when they have got rid of these corrupt branches which are doing all the mischief; the pruning, instead of being hurtful, cuts off the rebel and benefits the loyal subject; and that is what King Christ will do when He comes in glory to exercise judgment. Never again have the idea of resurrection in connection with this passage, which refers entirely to the King coming to His throne, a proof that He will pacify the world and bring in a rule of peace, of glorious peace, a reign of victory and conquest and the putting down of evil.

Now let me refer you to 2 Thess. i. 9 and we will go back to the 6th verse—"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire"—when the Lord held His court on Sinai long ago, you know, He was attended by myriads of angels, unhappily translated "myriads of saints," and many people think they were the souls of departed men; but the word was angels, as we learn elsewhere, angels in ranks; when He returns He will have these ranks of angels—"taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." Here we have ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον. Destruction, ruin, death; these are the definitions of the term used in 2 Thess.; not life, but death.

2 Peter iii. 7—"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." This word ἀπωλείας signifies to kill, to destroy, to perish utterly. Now the men to whom we are indebted for our Greek lexicons had no peculiar doctrine to substantiate; they had as scholars to give the proper literal definitions of the terms. So that here in Peter and Thessalonians the meaning is absolute literal destruction of the person and of his life. "But," you say, "do not the Scriptures teach that the finally impenitent are to be tormented?" Let us see. I do find men tormented in the Book of Revelation (ix. 4-6), but I also find the fact that they are alive and in the flesh, and wish to die to escape the torment, and death flees from them. There is no instance in the Book of God of disembodied souls subjected to

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torment. Now I want you to consider this. All the dealings of God in this matter are with men upon the earth, and not at all with "disembodied souls"—words unknown to Scripture. "And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them,"—which means that the torments would cease as soon as death took place—"but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death,"—death is deliverance from torment, of course—"and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." Now how is this reconcilable with the invisible post-mortem hell about which men speak? The thing will have a reality—a dread reality—but it will be the last, the end of being to them, the second death.

Then we have in Rev. xiv. 9-11 also a dread picture of torments. "If any man,"—of those living upon the earth at that time—"worship the beast, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, . . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." This is all very awful; but the great fact is that Christ will be present, and will be visible, and His holy angels, executing judgment upon the earth; and those rebels who worship the beast instead of Christ will be tormented. You remember the plagues of Egypt; the plagues of the Apocalypse are of the same character upon a vastly greater scale. The plagues of the Apocalypse have their root and initial meaning in the plagues of Egypt, just as Pharaoh was a type of this wilful King the beast. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Ascendeth up to the ages, as an undying memorial; just as the ruins of ancient Babylon prove that it was burnt, and as the Dead Sea marks the site of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were destroyed by fire and brimstone; the memorial of the judgment will last unto the ages.

And now mark: "And they have no rest day nor night." What does that mean? Eternity? No. You do not speak of day and night when speaking of eternity. They have no rest day nor night on earth. They worship the beast, and as long as they do this rest will be impossible; for it is the day of judgment, and the Lord is the judge, and He will reign until he hath put all enemies under His feet.

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." You will find this on

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many a gravestone, but it is misapprehended. The persecutions of the Antichrist, the sufferings of the Christians of those days who were not ready when the Lord came, will be so fearful, that the statement is true, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth*," for they escape the torments of those who worship the Beast, and they rest from their labours, and their works follow them. They would not, they will not, worship the Beast. Death flees from the rebels that do this; but comes as a blessed deliverance to the loyal servants of Jesus Christ.

One passage more, brethren; a passage of extreme importance, as it embraces the whole of this doctrine about life and death. 2 Cor. ii. 14–16, "Now, thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death: and to the other the savour of life unto life." Literally, "To these it is the odour of death unto death; to those the odour of life unto life." Life given in Christ to all who receive Him; and in the case of those who will not receive Him, death. In this passage, as in multitudes of others, we have this thing: life bestowed by Him Who only hath immortality, upon mortal beings; for the root of all the mischief that has for ages cast its black shadow upon the bright character of our Father is the pagan notion that man as such has an immortal soul. There is only one Being in the universe that can say, "I live for ever," and that is God; and Christ has God's life in Him, and He imparts this life to believers, and that constitutes the hope of the Christian—the hope of immortality in his immortal Head; that is the doctrine of Scripture, and God was justified in saying that His creation was "very good" because He meant it to be the theatre of a splendid redemption, which, in its issues, was to put an end to evil, an end to sin, to pain, to tears, to sorrow, to death for ever.

A cleansed universe, dear brethren, is to me a splendid, a wonderful idea. God said "Very good," and He will say it again when He looks down from His heavenly throne upon a restored world, handed back to Him by His glorious Son, a world-wide empire brought into subjection to holiness and truth.

Age after age men have sinned and suffered, although with our sufferings there are mingled multitudes of mercies which call for thanksgiving; age after age tempest, war, pestilence, and famine have come and gone; the earth has drunk the blood of its inhabitants through countless generations. Shall these things last for ever? God's character says no; Christ's work says no; the nature of man, who is only mortal except he be in Christ, says no; the whole arrangement of this Book declares no; and one looks forward with exceeding joy to the time when the former things with their tears and sorrow and sin and suffering and death shall

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be done away to make room for the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Now just look at the text for a moment. Mark it well. God is seen wiping away tears from the eyes of men. He loves them, then. They are His children. He is kind, compassionate. Tears are the sign of sorrow and grief. God wipes away tears, that is to say, by having put an end to all grief and all sorrow. No tears, means no cause for tears, nothing to be sorry for.

And there shall be no more death. "O death, I will be thy destruction." The destruction of death enters into the arrangement of Christ's redemption. What does that mean? It means the bestowal of immortality, of His own sinless immortality; for you may rely upon it that such a thing as an immortal sinner is entirely out of the question; it would be a monster in God's creation.

"Neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Now let me remark that any being who is capable of pain is by that fact proved to be mortal; he who suffers has in that suffering a proof that he must go down to the dust some day. Nothing can be immortal but that which is perfectly sinless; and this brings us back to the fact that Christ Jesus came to give "*life*." Again and again the Gospel puts this truth in this condensed form. I have heard men say: "We have this immortal soul and we cannot get rid of it; God Himself cannot destroy it if He would." This is gross blasphemy, and a thorough misunderstanding of the Divine meaning of redemption. You have been told that Christ came to give us happiness, and to take away sufferings and sorrow; He came to redeem men, and so to make them fit for a blessed heaven. But, brethren, we must take God's words to mean what they say; the interpretations of commentators under the influence of traditional theology will lead you astray; but if you accept what is set before you in this Book you will not mistake.

The Lord Jesus came that we mortals might have life in Him. This is the record, that God hath *given* to us eternal life, and this life is *in* His Son. That this includes blessedness is certain; for eternal life in misery is unknown to the Bible.

Let me explain my meaning in a few words. It is not the belief of certain truths to which I am referring. It is the reception of *life*. The gift to us of an immortal soul? Not that. It is the in-breathing of Christ's nature, Christ's life into us, that constitutes the Christian. The spirit of life or the life of Christ given to a man makes him one with Christ, and there is the basis of immortality, of incorruptibility, for that is the word. Not an immortal man, but a man made incorruptible in the image of Christ; a thorough man, a man after the image of Christ, Who is the image of God; that is God's idea of perfect manhood.

Well now, finally, if this view be correct, you see why God insists

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upon human belief of His truth; why such stress is laid on faith in the Scripture: God intends to make us His sons, the sons of the resurrection; and then we can die no more; just as in His case, Who is our Leader, Who says, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore."

It just comes to this. We are asked to believe in the Son because we have sinned, and stumbled, and fallen, and are unable to escape from the mire and pollution into which we have fallen; we have dishonoured our Creator, and He graciously wishes to remedy the evil by a new creation. Our strength is weakness; our boasted deathlessness is the old lie of the devil, who said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die." Our only immortality is in Christ; may God in His infinite grace grant that we may all meet by-and-bye at the right hand of the Life-giver, when the Church shall be glorified at His second coming, and then there will be an end of all evil! Amen.

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM.

"The kingdom of God is within you."—LUKE xvii. 21.

TO my paper on this subject Mr. F. Moore offers three principal objections.

First.—"The non-necessity for founding such a paper on Luke xvii. 21." In reply, I observe (1) that Mr. Moore is not opposed to "my definition of the nature of the kingdom." (2) He admits it is a subject "very generally misunderstood." (3) He says there is a "very prevalent but untenable belief that it is simply a spiritual" kingdom. (4) He must also admit that this passage in Luke is very often urged as proof that it is "simply a spiritual kingdom."

Under these circumstances, I confess my inability to understand on what grounds Mr. Moore is "impressed with the non-necessity" of my paper.

Is there no necessity for trying to correct a "very general misunderstanding" of such an important subject as the "kingdom of God?" or for calling attention to what is a "very prevalent but untenable belief" concerning it? And in our humble endeavours to help our fellow-men to a better understanding, is it not wise to take those Scriptures which are relied on, and endeavour to show that they give no support to the position sought to be proved?

Not long ago, I heard Luke xvii. 21 and Romans xiv. 17 referred to as proof of its spiritual nature, and this is far from being an exceptional case. How then is there "no scope for treating upon the nature of the 'kingdom of God' to be found in this passage?"

A second objection is, "The text has been *isolated*."

The few words at the head of my paper are undoubtedly *isolated* there; but is there any ground for implying that they are used in an "isolated" position? It has long been with me a matter of first importance to avoid building anything upon an isolated passage, knowing the evils of

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such a course. Mr. Moore "looks down the whole paragraph, and sees nothing but the most elaborate illustration of what our Lord intended to teach." In this we do not differ, although, it appears, we differ as to *what* He intended to teach. Yet, instead of looking at an "isolated text," I have surpassed Mr. Moore in breadth of survey; for both what goes before, and what follows, as well as the "whole paragraph," together with time, place, circumstances, what gave rise to the words, the evident design of His questioners, the warning given to His disciples, and His teaching that followed, were all duly taken account of, and all seemed to agree in illustrating and supporting the view I have taken. If I have failed to get at the meaning of the words notwithstanding, it certainly has not been by isolating them from their surroundings.

Third.—Mr. Moore objects to the "Exposition," and thinks it an "attempt to bring out of the passage a meaning which is not contained in it." Well, infallibility is not claimed; and, although we may differ as to the meaning, I cordially concur in the "desire that every portion of Scripture should be expounded so as to convey the intended sense," and have no desire or wish for more. But an honest effort to bring out the sense of a passage is not to be despised, although the meaning should be missed or mistaken. And although *not* "set apart for the ministry," there is no reason why we should not "aim at examining a text as deeply" and thoroughly as we can. "Examining a text" is not a privilege belonging exclusively to those "set apart for the ministry," and a suitable paper finds a place in the RAINBOW irrespective of the writer's position in society.

Trusting, then, to the reader's acquaintance with text and context, let us again look at our Lord's reply to the Pharisees. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." This is His first statement. What can it mean? For, although it is illustrated by what follows, it nevertheless seems to have a meaning and significance of its own. It "cometh not with observation." This I take to signify that in some sense the kingdom will not be observed or seen coming. And the next clause, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there!" serves to show it what sense it "cometh not with observation." It cannot mean that it will come absolutely concealed from view. But it may mean, and I think it does, that it will not come in such a manner as to afford an opportunity for any one to tell others of its approach. A vessel homeward bound, and looked for, may be seen at a great distance, and the observer may raise a cry, "See, there it is!" or in the case of a friend, his approach may be announced, "See here!" he is at the gate; or, "See there!" he cometh on the road. Such announcement, however, can only be appropriate when the vessel or the visitor first comes under "observation," or within view; for, "See here! or see there!" necessarily supposes a discovery of what is not known to the others, and the moment the latter become cognisant of it, the "See here! or See there!" is needless. The vessel arrived, visible to all, or the visitor in midst of his friends, would make the cry of "See here! or See there!" wholly out of place; the vessel and visitor being "among," or in the midst of them. Or, if their arrival should take place "*un*observed," when approaching, then, in that case, there would be no room for the "See here! or see there!" at all.

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Now the Pharisees were watching any movement on the part of Jesus to "restore the kingdom to Israel," and reign as King, that they might disclose His designs; and hence to their demand, "When the kingdom should come," His reply is appropriate, and at the same time it was a warning to the disciples not to be deceived with reports about the coming of the kingdom.

Mr. Moore understands the reply thus: "They shall not be able to say the kingdom of God is among you, for it cometh without observation." It will be seen, however, that this is neither our Lord's saying, nor a legitimate deduction from it. And it is just here where our friend, I think, fails to catch the meaning of what is said. He has not only deranged the passage, by transposing the words, placing those *last* which, in the reply, are *first*, but he has also failed to observe a distinction, where, I think, there is a most important difference, which has led to confusion in the use of terms. "Behold, the kingdom of God is among you," he takes to be a saying attributed to the "delusive teachers," and evidently understands it to be merely a variation in the expression, but to signify precisely the same thing as "Lo here! or Lo there!" whereas these sayings, instead of being used as synonymous, appear to me to be used with a significance placing them in direct contrast, as opposite as light and darkness. Elsewhere our Lord gives similar warning, and tells the disciples that "false Christs and false prophets shall arise," and show great "signs" and wonders; "insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect." And, "Then," He says, "if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." "Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not." And He again assures them that His coming shall be as the lightning that cometh out of the east and shineth even to the west (Matt. xxiv. 23-27). Now, what purpose are all these repeated warnings intended to serve? Are they not meant to prevent a belief in these "false prophets" and their reports, that, in some secret or secluded place Christ might be found making preliminary arrangements for the overthrow of existing governments, and for the establishment of His kingdom? One thing, at all events, is certain. If we are deceived by such reports, it will not be because we have not been sufficiently warned. For, knowing that all the skill and craft available would be employed to "deceive, if possible, the very elect," Jesus, by these repeated warnings, seeks to make it impossible in the case of all who give heed to His words. And when He says, "Behold, I have told you before," or perhaps better, "Behold, I have foretold you" (Matt. xxiv. 25), He gives us to understand that we are wholly without excuse.

It would perhaps be unfair to conclude these remarks without pointing out what seem to me serious defects in Mr. Moore's exposition—"They shall not be able to say the kingdom of God is among you, for it comes without observation." But this meaning seems to be repudiated in the last paragraph, where we are told that "Christ is forewarning His hearers that there would arise delusive teachers, with the cry, 'See here, see there, behold the kingdom of God is among you.'" Now, the same words cannot surely mean that they *shall* say, "See here! see there!" and also that they *shall not* say, "See here! see there!" Indeed, the terms employed in the reply by Jesus are so differently applied, and so

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transposed in the exposition, that it seems impossible to accept our Lord's reply and the exposition as expressing the same thoughts. Just make a trial by placing them side by side, thus—"They shall not be able to say the kingdom of God is among you." Why? "for it comes without observation," says Mr. Moore. "They shall not say, Lo here! or Lo there!" Why? "for, behold, the kingdom of God is among you," says Jesus. Can we conceive of two statements more unlike? Not only as to what they are not to say, but the reason assigned why they are not to say it, seem to me as unlike as possible. We may rest assured, I think, that the "delusive teachers" are never credited with using such a statement as, "Behold, the kingdom is among you." The very saying would be fatal to their success in deception. It is a statement calling attention to what may be seen, heard, or apprehended in some way, clearly manifested where you *are*, instead of requiring you to go "here," "there," to "the desert," "the secret chamber," only to be deceived and fooled in seeking what can be seen nowhere. The statement seems to me to be the very antithesis of their cry, "Lo here!" Honesty and truth can alone stand forth with the open challenge, "see for yourselves! "Behold, it is among you!" Imposition and deception shun the light of day, and can only escape detection by seeking concealment in the secret places of the earth. "Behold the man," said Pilate, when Jesus, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, came forth from the judgment hall, but how inappropriate the words if spoken while Jesus remained within. Men might have speculated as to His whereabouts then, but none could do so when He was present "among them," before their eyes. And as certainly there will be no more saying, "Lo here! or Lo there!" when once it can with truth be said, "Behold, the kingdom of God is among you!" That will settle once and for ever all such sayings.

That these sayings cannot be used interchangeably without destroying the sense of the passage, can easily be made apparent by using what is given as the meaning in the one part, and the actual words of the passage in their proper order untransposed, in the other; thus, "They will not be able to say the Kingdom of God is among you;" for "behold, the Kingdom of God is among you," *i.e.*, they shall not be able to say it, because it is a reality! Or try the reverse false saying and change them as we may, we only get the same unsatisfactory result.

Neither can the fact that "the kingdom cometh not with observation," of itself account for the false saying *ceasing* to be used; for it is just as clearly stated that they *shall use it*, as that they shall *not* use it; yet all the while that it is being used, it is certainly true that the "Kingdom cometh not with observation!" How, in accordance with his exposition, Mr. Moore may account for this, I do not know, but according to the view submitted in my paper, nothing is more simple or natural. For, if there is to be such a change as that from the using of "See here!" to *not* using it, so must there also be a change in the *time* and *circumstances* to account for that change. The question then is, *When* shall they say, "See here, or there?" and we have an answer in the very heart of the context. To the disciples Jesus said, "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here," &c. (Luke xvii. 22). And

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in Matthew xxiv. 21-23, "Then shall be great tribulation." "Then if any man shall say, Lo here, &c., believe it not." It can thus only be between the time when the "Son of Man goeth into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom," and the time of "His appearing and His kingdom," that this deception can be practised. For, it is "*after* that tribulation" that He comes; and when He comes to claim His kingdom, He will not be found emerging from "desert" solitudes, or "secret chamber" to seize upon it by stealth; but openly, visibly, and direct will He come to claim the kingdom as His own, and with power sufficient to establish His claim. It should be observed also that on both occasions our Lord uses the similitude of the lightning to illustrate His meaning; and what could be chosen better fitted than the lightning, "which cometh out of the east and shineth even to the west," which can neither be concealed in desert nor in secret chamber, which admits of no opportunity for saying, "See here! or see there!" "for, behold, it is among you," seen by all, and its coming heralded by none. So comes the KING in His kingdom. "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him."

Cupar. J. MILL.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. III.

Reasons for the Incarnation Considered. Connection between the First and Second Advents.

IN the second Advent the gates of heaven roll back and a King issues forth to conquer and to reign. His breath, which destroys His foes, revives His friends from their graves, and the hosts of attendant angels are swelled by an army of His glorified saints. Sudden as fire fell upon the cities of the plain, and tongues of flame descended at Pentecost; sudden as a multitude of the heavenly host appeared with the herald angel to the Shepherds; sudden as the Wayfarer disappeared at Emmaus, and as He noiselessly returned to the breathless newshearers in the upper room, the bruit of the archangel's trump calls up the reverberating horrors and transcendant glories of the scene, amid which the simple children of faith live securely as the lightnings themselves.

It is a world like ours of to-day, upon which the thunderbolt falls from out a midsummer sky. A world mottled by extremes of civilisation and of barbarism. Uneasy under its load of scientific knowledge, but defiant through the number of its resources, and blasphemously incredulous of law, value or obedience in any other sphere than that world of sense and matter into which it has withdrawn itself as an oyster to its shell.

It is a world of nations, peoples, and tongues, with heathen ready to be given as the inheritance of the conqueror, and with warfare going on upon a scale such as the universe never saw before, the very highest civilisation being employed to augment the power of its engines, and to

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extend the scope of their ravages, and also immediately after to mitigate their effects. The years of peace must be preluded by the day of vengeance, of restitution, of recompense. The puny force of kings and peoples confederated to do the wrong is dashed to the ground, but wherever, in the multiplied strifes of that period, there is a cause of righteousness and faith, expiring beneath overwhelming assaults, the heavenly conqueror lifts up its head and makes it triumphant from one end of the earth to the other. The King has his favourites, and He establishes them in their provinces and governments. Every framework of society which was a scaffold for unrighteousness and a refuge for iniquity, every usage, tradition, law, dominion, which obstructs the making of a highway for truth and equity, every engine of oppression under which masses of men groaned for ages without hope, is demolished with the era in which they grew and flourished. A personal government, omniscient and omnipresent, minute and searching, repressive of all evil, graciously helpful to all good, is now introduced; and the roar of elements and armies, the cries of affright and despair, the hurricanes from winged hosts, the groans of the slain of the Lord, are succeeded by a great silence, which to the listening ear makes audible, "Be still, and know that I am God." Truly a great silence. The argument about miracles ended; the supernatural discovered; the last Bampton lecture delivered, and the secretary of the Christian Evidence Society gone no man knoweth whither, except that it cannot be to get subscriptions.

But what is the moral significance of this triumph and this glory, beyond its being a vindication of Divine Sovereignty and of righteous law? What sermon of lasting and measureless importance is preached by it? What foundations for the happier future laid? What guiding lights kindled by it, capable of piercing any darkness and never to go out?

To answer these questions we must recur to the first Advent, and inquire concerning the Man and His followers, who in the second Advent occupy so strangely opposite a position. If we ask, Who is it and what is it that triumphs at the second coming? the answer is, "The despised and rejected of men and His followers, and He overcomes the world by His own unworldliness." Here we begin to see the vital significance of the relationship and the connection between the two. That which suffered in the first Advent is glorified in the second, that which was brought low is exalted, what was despised is enthroned, what was rejected rules. And not in another sphere to which worldly conditions are foreign, and among beings to whom the lesson would be inapplicable, but in the world itself with all its time conditions continued—the identical theatre whereon the cause of Christ went down, seeing that cause made universally supreme.

Now what were the evil world-forces before which Christ's cause went down? Remember He was manifested that the sin of the world might be revealed to it. He provoked the latent sin by His own contrast to it. We mention first the worship of *power* rather than goodness. Much might be pleaded for this sin from the condition of the world in which it is manifested, for it is only power that wins. In the struggle for existence power may well be worshipped as the god of victory, and whoever will "succeed," as the saying is, in this life, must worship it,

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though in doing so he may lose his own soul. But Jesus Christ exhibited Himself as mere goodness, dissevered from power, except for unselfish ends. Possessed of limitless and miraculous resources, He used none of them to gratify a single worldly aim, nay, more, a single world want. What could be thought of such a man by the world into which He came? His own nation were fretting under the galling Roman yoke—and here was a man whose fame extended from Dan to Beersheba, whose difficulty was not to collect, but to dismiss or escape from crowds—a man whom the multitude wanted to make a king, who could have gone to battle without a commissariat or sumpter mules, being able to feed His soldiers by a word. And this man, with the game in His hands, lets all the cards slip out of His fingers, talks, instead, of love to our enemies, speaks, instead, of a kingdom which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When Jerusalem is stirred at His coming, He exhibits no political sagacity, rides meekly and weaponless upon a mule, and accepts the children's Hosanna while He would refuse the soldiers' shout. The world bore with it for a time, expecting daily a disclosure of the *Zeitgeist*, but it did not come, and they could endure the contemptible novelty no longer.

Another old-world force which the Saviour confronted as a pilgrim and a stranger was "*Fraud*," euphemised in these days as "sharpness," and "smartness," and having an almost universal dominion in professions, trades, and manufactures. Here also might large excuses be tendered for a sin which under present conditions of competitive existence, if indulged by one, must lead to the infliction of scores besides—men, it might almost be said, from sheer necessity and for the sake of honesty in one direction, being driven to dishonesty in another. With regard, nevertheless, to this hoary vice of a toil-cursed world, Christ stayed not at pointing out the needlessness and futility of a carking anxiety as to means of life, the danger and deceitfulness of riches, the treasure of contentment with humble things, and the permanent preciousness of treasure in heaven. His passive meekness forsook Him in presence of the irreverent intrusions of barter and traffic into the symbol of His Father's House, and twice with righteous zeal enflaming a kingly mien he drove cattle sheep and traders from the Temple, overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and dismissed the sellers of doves. If ever the functions of commerce appeared reasonable and convenient, it was when they made available the offerings and the tribute money that the Temple service demanded of the worshippers. Nevertheless, so hardly can merchandise be exempt from fraud, so insidiously corrupting are the tendencies of even petty trading that the heavy words spoken long before by prophets were strictly applicable—"My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." Unto what complexion would the world come if such a man were permitted to live? The virus of the world's disease rushed out to slay him. Christ Himself became the subject of an act of barter, and the world's fraud was consummated in the kiss of Judas.

Another world characteristic is its love of convenient and exculpating lies. Christ refused to adopt them or be enmeshed by them. He enforced the truth the world was already possessed of, and added to it the great and glorious things which it was His mission to proclaim; and because

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His truth was inconvenient, culpatory, revolutionary, the world would have none of it. It was not a question with the world, Was it true? but, Was it safe? was it useful? And because it could never be safe to array oneself against the national leaders, backed by the prejudices of the entire people, and never useful to abjure the highway of prosperous men, it was with a sigh of relief that Judea heard that the voice of the Truth-speaker would soon emit its last cries from Calvary.

We need not go further. It was the truth, the meekness, and the righteousness of the Saviour that went down before the world-forces at the first Advent, as well as His purity and love—and following Him in all after ages, the same qualities in His disciples have brought upon them persecution, if not death. What now is the significance of second Advent scenery and events? The language of the 45th Psalm shall reply, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously, because of *truth* and *meekness* and *righteousness;* and Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. . . Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness, therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Apart from the Incarnation the second Advent is void of its great lessons. It is not force that wins, or fraud that is gainful, or lies that are safe. It is the cause that goes down before the world's worship of power; it is the meek, the loving, and the lowly man; it is he who cannot be cruel or unjust; it is they who are oppressed and fleeced by fraud; it is they who love the truth and will die rather than adulterate it: it is these that are destined to a glorious triumph.

As the world is at present constituted, everything is against the success of mere goodness, meekness, righteousness, and truth, but then, in the new age which He who was so good that He was too bad to live inaugurates—these are the very qualities which will alone succeed and secure dominion, love and honour.

The meek shall inherit the earth, the mountains shall be made to fall down, and the valleys shall be exalted, that a King's highway may go throughout the world for truth, and meekness, and righteousness to ride prosperously. Then shall the whole earth become a Temple of the Lord—our Father's House—and therefore from out of it must retire the old-established traffickers and chapmen; the exchanges will be cleared of "rings" and "riggers," and the commercial freebooters, who by an afternoon's transaction could tax the bread of a nation while robbing the producer, will find that "smartness" is no longer a licit vocation. Murderous manufactures will have slain their last victims, and labour be no longer regarded as a commodity to be purchased at the cheapest rate and worked to its utmost endurance, for mankind will then live by the help of, and not upon each other. And what honour was formerly conceded to the successful tricksters with wealth, will then fall to the producers of it in proportion to their labours and dangers on behalf of the common weal. With the cessation of the struggle for existence, of course wars would cease; for mankind have no natural enmity towards one another, but are forced into it artificially by deeming it a necessity to live and finding others in the way.

Under the perfect government of that happy epoch, the resources of

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the world will be boundlessly extended, and its population, without discomfort, be enormously increased. As for truth, it shall spring forth from the earth, it will be the very life of every soul, its dissemination will be the chief and the happiest occupation of the world's inhabitants. Peace and truth throughout all the days of the reign of the King and His saints! A day of brightness, not, alas! to end without cloud and storm, but out of the dissolving elements of which a new earth with even higher and more lasting elements of blessedness will emerge.

Bristol. HENRY DEACON.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

CHAPTER III.

THE COVENANT SOLEMNLY RATIFIED.

THE portion of sacred history to which we now come is of such supreme moment with reference to the subject under consideration, that it is hoped none will begrudge a careful attention to the text of the whole of Genesis Fifteenth; which here follows in a form which, after careful study, the writer believes conveys the meaning, and in a measure the fruitful suggestions of the original.

Genesis XV.

"After these things came the word of Yehweh unto Abram in a vision, saying: Do not fear, Abram; *I* am a shield for thee and thine exceedingly great reward.

"(2) Then says Abram: Lord Yehweh, what canst Thou give me, when *I* am going on childless, and the heir of my household is *he* of Damascus—Eliezer? (3) Then says Abram: Lo! to me hast Thou not given seed; and lo! A SON OF MY HOUSEHOLD is my heir!

"(4) And lo! THE WORD OF YEHWEH comes unto him, saying: THIS ONE SHALL NOT BE THY HEIR; but ONE WHO SHALL COME FORTH FROM THY BODY, *he* shall be thy heir.

"(5) So He brings him forth abroad and says: Look steadfastly now towards the heavens, and count the stars, if thou be able to count them. Then He says to him: Thus shall be thy seed.

"(6) And he rested faith in Yehweh. So He reckons it to him as righteousness.

"(7) Then He says unto him: *I* am Yehweh, who brought thee forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give to thee this land to possess it.

"(8) So he says: Lord Yehweh, in what way am I to understand that I shall possess it?

"(9) And He says to him: Take for Me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

"(10) So he takes for Him all these, and divides them in the midst, and places each piece over against its fellow; but the birds he divided not. (11) Then come down the birds of prey upon the carcases; but Abram drives them away.

"(12) Then it comes to pass that the sun goes in, and A DEEP SLEEP

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has fallen upon Abram; and lo! A TERROR—A GREAT DARKNESS—falling upon him. (13) Then He says to Abram:—

"Thou must understand clearly that a sojourner shall thy seed become in a land not theirs: then indeed will they make them serve and will humble them four hundred years. (14) Moreover also the nation which they serve *I* am going to judge; and after that shall they come forth with great substance. (15) But THOU shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. (16) And in the fourth generation shall they come back hither; for not complete is the iniquity of the Amorites as yet.

"(17) So it comes to pass, when THE SUN has gone in, and A THICK DARKNESS has come on, then lo! a smoking furnace and lamp of fire, which has passed along between these pieces.

"(18) On that day did Yehweh cut up with Abram a covenant, saying: To thy seed have I given this land,—from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates;—(19) the Kennite and the Kennizite and the Kadmonite (20) and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim (21) and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite."

Tenderly as a mother draws from her son a heart-trouble by warily approaching it and giving an opportunity for its disclosure without uttering a formal suspicion of its existence, so does the gracious Yehweh lead Abram to unbosom his mind respecting a matter which has begun to weigh heavily upon him. The trouble is due to so long a delay to give him a son, and the way in which it is probed is as suggestive as it is tender. God reveals HIMSELF. He does this in some arresting and impressive way to Abram's senses; for "the word of Yehweh came unto Abram in a vision." Yehweh then draws still nearer to His servant, even to his very thought and feeling by formally announcing Himself—by calling attention afresh to what *He* is and will be to His beloved friend: "Do not fear, Abram; *I* am a shield for thee and thy exceeding great reward." This statement is clearly intended to serve as an overture to Abram to own frankly whether he finds his Divine patron to be all this to him; as much as to say: "And if thy fondest hopes are not yet fulfilled, canst thou still perfectly trust Me, that in nothing will I be lacking to thee?" The overture has its desired effect, and Abram's tongue is loosed to confide his care to Yehweh, who has thus most seasonably appeared to him. The deepening vexation is wholly unbosomed; and with the happiest result.

It is observable that twice over in the chapter before us is this method pursued. For when the chief trouble is disposed of for the time, then a second overture is made: "Furthermore, *I* am so and so,—What dost thou say to that?" (v. 7). Later on in our study of the Abrahamic Covenant, we hope to take a more complete survey of the manner in which God puts Himself into the covenant which He makes with Abram. At present we merely note how beautifully these two Divine advances divide this fifteenth chapter into its two parts.

Reverting to the former of them, we can scarcely fail to notice, if we read connectedly, how strikingly the opening of this narrative dovetails into the close of the one which immediately precedes it. Abram has

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lately been in conflict with foes; and it is in conflict that a *shield* is needed: "*I*," says Yehweh, "am thy shield." Abram has just refused all *reward* from the King of Sodom: "*I*," says Yehweh, "am thy exceeding great reward."

Perhaps this is not all. Perhaps the courage and skill which have been brought into exercise and so signally crowned with success in chasing the marauding chiefs, have led Abram to deem it possible that by means of further exploits, not unlike that just ended, Yehweh intends to give him possession of the land. It is of the nature of bravery to feed on its own triumphs. Abram is flushed with victory. His daring has been justified. Why should he not dare again, and aim at something more? His servants have been tried now for warlike deeds; and, under Divine direction, why should not something vaster be attempted and accomplished? A small band may demoralise and vanquish a nation, and then others may hasten to submit. How should ABRAM doubt this, after what he has passed through? And so the Divine mention to him now of "shield" and "reward" may very well seem to him to betoken that God is about to tell him to buckle on his "shield," and take the promised land as his "reward." He may very well think this, for he has yet much to learn, and little knows the tedious path of patience he has to tread.

At all events, such an apprehension would supply a strikingly fit basis for the interrogatory with which Abram meets the Divine overture. "O Lord Yehweh! what canst Thou give me so long as I am going on from year to year childless; what were the whole land to me without a son? Nothing can make amends for this lack."

Suffice it to say, that this outcry of Abram's long-tried patience is met by an explicit declaration that the missing link shall yet be supplied to him; he shall have a son of his own body begotten; which declaration is impressively confirmed by a night vision of the innumerable stars that beam forth in the heavens. Like these stars for number, he is told, so shall his seed be. And thus he is reminded that—

> "The voice that rolls the stars along
> Speaks all the promises."

It is enough. Once more Abram's heart rests in Yehweh's word, and his confidence is at once rewarded by his being received into higher and more formal favour than ever. Abram's right faith is accepted in lieu and in promise of universal rightness. On this basis a closer friendship with God can be realised; and further, deeper disclosures can be vouchsafed.

And now—as already remarked—a second time is Abram invited to speak out what is in his heart by a Divine overture taking the form of an announcement by God of Himself, in respect of the relationship into which, in His own good pleasure, He has entered towards His servant. This time the Divine affirmation takes a turn which is expressly adapted to lead Abram to say what he wishes concerning the possession of the land. "*I* am Yehweh, who brought thee forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give to thee this land to possess it." As much as to inquire, "And what hast thou to say to this?"

We see no good cause for thinking that this question is directed to the

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calling forth of a confession of any further unbelief. Abram has already rolled his burden on his God. But faith itself may beget strong desire to know more than at present is known of the time and way of fulfilment. And precisely so we understand the evoked question—not as the question of doubt which our Authorised Version seems to make it, but—as a question of most natural and thoroughly believing curiosity: "Lord Yehweh; it shall doubtless be as Thou sayest; but still in what way am I to understand the promise? Wilt Thou graciously throw light on this? How does the deferment of the gift of the promised seed affect the promise of the land?"

If we may suppose that the one purpose of Yehweh just now is to excite inquisitiveness and susceptibility in Abram's mind, we thus see that purpose attained. What follows is fitted to rouse expectation to its fullest height. Abram's question is not at once answered; but it would certainly seem that it is to be answered, *after certain preparations are made;* and, therefore, that it is to be answered with some peculiar significance, as though, indeed, some deep mystery were about to be disclosed. Almost any formal preparations interposed between question and reply would naturally have this effect. How much more when the preliminaries to the Divine response are what they are in this case! It cannot but be that they should fall with a most rousing force upon Abram's mind! He is to provide sacrifices; and not merely one, but on a scale of considerable magnitude, with ample variety of victims, select, and of age mature.

What is the meaning of this? It means that there is now to be a formal covenanting ratification of the promises; though how this was intimated to Abram, the brevity of the narrative does not permit us to discern; but there is to be the cutting up of a covenant, and Abram's preparations are made accordingly.

Can we doubt that he rose early in the morning; that he personally superintended the selection of the animals divinely named; that, accustomed thus to worship and to receive divine communications at the propitiatory and eucharistic altar, he himself solemnly directed the protracted and piercingly heart-awakening slaughter of the innocent creatures from his flocks and his herds and his dovecot? Can we doubt that all he had received, and heard, and seen, and known of altar-worship, would be now quickened into life in his well-stored memory; modified, of course, by the contracting intention which, for this occasion, has been made known for his guidance in this his preliminary part?

The coming covenant does, indeed, give to those preparatory arrangements a most interesting turn.

"This very solemn form of ratifying a covenant is again particularly mentioned in Jer. xxxiv. 18. It consisted in cutting the throat of the victim and pouring out its blood. The carcase was then divided, lengthwise, as nearly as possible into two equal parts, which, being placed opposite to each other at a short distance, the covenanting parties approached at the opposite ends of the passage thus formed, and, meeting in the middle, took the customary oath. The practice was by no means confined to the Hebrews. Traces of it may be found in the Greek and Roman writers, and in the accounts of travellers" (*Kitto*).

Abram accordingly divides the three larger victims, viz., the heifer,

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the goat, and the ram, into their six halves, which he so places over against each other as to form a path for the living through the dead.

These preparations complete, nothing remains but for Abram to wait the appearance of the Divine Messenger who has heretofore manifested Himself, and at whose bidding these provisions have been made. Some time elapses, probably extending to several hours, and still the Glorious One delays. Thus, after the stir and care of the morning, Abram has leisure given him to collect his thoughts, to reaffirm his faith and willing-hood, and to exercise afresh the patience for which he has already found much need. While standing thus in solemn readiness to enter into compact with God, birds of prey come down upon the carcases—an evil omen! Even thus would irrational disorder, violence, voracity, and uncleanness, defile all holy things, mar all sacrifices, devour all feasts, and drag all honour and beauty in the dust. This must not be. Not so lightly does Abram regard Divine worship, not so careless is he as to the issue of this expected climax of all his fellowship heretofore with Deity, that he can stand by and witness such desecration. He drives off the birds of prey.

And still the Coming One cometh not; and by this time the shadows are lengthening, and night draws on apace. Soon will the sun withdraw into his chamber in the west, and leave those shadows to gather, beneath which the hungry vultures may work their obscene will, and the worshipper be powerless to hinder them. And, besides, what with his previous night's walk beneath the stars, and his morning's early rising and active work in preparing the sacrifices, and now the long watching protracted until nightfall, Abram has grown weary; and, unable longer to hold out, sinks helpless upon the green sward into a profound slumber. He may have feared such an issue, and dreaded to be caught sleeping at his post, and so gone off into an uneasy, apprehensive sleep, deep but not restful. The darkness of the outer night goes with him into his dreams. There is darkness within; a nameless, overmastering dread steals over him and more and more possesses him. As light is the symbol of God, darkness fitly serves to steep the soul in a sense of being forsaken, cut off, cast away from the Divine Parent of good. O Abram! where is now thy God? Thou hast waited long for Him, and waited in vain! Not a ray of light is seen. The stars may be numberless, but every one of them is hid.

It does not at once appear what was the design for which this deep sleep and dark dread came upon Abram. But, whatever may have been the full purport of the singular visitation, there can be no doubt that it had the effect of preparing Abram for the evil tidings which were now disclosed to him, and which appear to have been conveyed to him while he was yet in the deep sleep. The information imparted was at once distressing and instructive. It must have caused him a sharp pang to learn that evil fortunes awaited the seed for which he had so much longed. His descendants, so far from taking early possession of Canaan, would become sojourners in some other land than this—a land of aliens, never destined like this good land to become their own. After a while those descendants would be enslaved and ill-used to such a degree as to bring down Divine judgment on the oppressors. Sad news, this!

And significant as sad. Thus rudely must be rocked the cradle of the

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promised great and mighty nation. The seed that is to bring the blessing must itself first feel the curse; must be enslaved and then redeemed to qualify it for its mission. A Messiahnic colouring lies on the view. The seed that bruises the serpent's head must itself be bruised or bitten in the heel. "When Israel was a youth then I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son" (Hosea xi. 1; compare Exodus iv. 22, 23; Jer. xxxi. 9): words fulfilled in the nation Israel, and then also fulfilled in the Christ (Matt. ii. 15). It was painful to hear of, but it was divinely wise and according to a well-adjusted plan of action, that Abram's seed should go down into Egypt and suffer there. It was equally wise that, in the prospect, Abram himself should suffer at once, by anticipatory fellowship with those who were to spring from his loins. How must this noble man have been beloved of God, to be thought worthy of a discipline so sharp, so refined!

Abram is in good hands. "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." A symbolic morning will not be long before it breaks in upon Abram's night of terror; and even now, before his night is ended, some solace is given, for he is told that his own life's day shall yet be well extended, and its lengthening shadows shall be mingled with the mellow light of an honourable, and prosperous, and blessed old age. He has leave given him to picture the happiness yet awaiting him of beholding his son and his son's sons ministering to his wants and hanging upon his words; until at length he shall be dismissed from his post, and be permitted to depart to the company of those who have gone before to await the Awakening Kinsman's advent.

So far, the Divine communication, made to Abram, as we conceive, while his wonderful sleep was still upon him. At length the sleeper awakes to discover that, so far is he from being forgotten and forsaken, on the contrary his sacrificial preparations are now to be honoured by a most solemn and striking covenanting ceremonial. While he has been involved in the toils of his dismal dreaming, his Divine Friend, Yehweh Himself in majestic manifestation, has come to the trysting-place; has, in fact, entered into the path of death; and there, midway, has taken His station to meet him, and enter with him into a covenant never to be forgotten. For, on opening his eyes, Abram beholds a significant spectacle, even a smoking furnace, giving light enough to make the surrounding darkness and its own smoke-wreaths visible; a smoking furnace, as if for the purpose of consuming and sending up to heaven the divine portion of the covenant sacrifices; a smoking furnace, telling the same solemn story of sin and its penalty, of divine holiness and its determination against sin, which has been told at all altars ever since the day when the cherubic throne was placed at the gate of paradise.

A lamp of fire is also seen, probably not as a distinct symbol; for the original text resolves the furnace and the lamp into a grammatical unit (literally: "which—*it* has passed between these pieces"), and thereby the statement naturally lends itself to the striking conception that the same object is both furnace and lamp; that is, the same fire is now lurid with smoke, and then becomes clear and bright; in other words, is first the dismaying, destroying, refining, and sublimating fire of holiness, and then the cheering and guiding, the friendly and festive light of love. Even as, in later times, though in separate symbols, there were the altar

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of sacrifice and the lamp of service and hospitality, from which and by which the priest passed into the most holy place; as also, when there, he found the altar and the lamp united in one, after a higher fashion in the glory which rested upon the mercy-seat, and from which He who dwelt between the cherubim did, on the basis of accepted propitiation and with beaming brightness breaking through the rifts of the clouds of incense, shine forth. Which Divine displays of holy love in the Temple we can readily believe to have been so characteristic and sacred as that nothing could be more natural to a Hebrew prophet than to describe the Almighty One as "Yehweh, whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem" (Isa. xxxi. 9; compare Ezek. i. 13).

If this be something like the meaning of the furnace-lamp, set down here in the midst of sacrifices; and if it was given to Abram to lay hold of its significance—and if it was not, its appearance to him was superfluous—then the whole occasion becomes luminous with a concentration of truth and grace which makes it a panorama of redemption. The whole course of holy mercy through sacrificial sin-bearing is laid open to Abram's view. He has, in a manner, been through the bitterness of death, and been raised again with a great awakening. He has also seen how the divine fire has burned to consume, and then beamed forth to cheer and bless. He has thus, in both ways, been shown the path of life through death, up into the divine presence where are fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. The shadows of death have encompassed him; the light of resurrection has dawned. What he has not now he shall have hereafter. He may go to his fathers in due course; but the deep sleep of death will not last for ever, whereas The Covenant will be not only ordered in all things and sure, but it will be abiding; as witness the uplifted right hand of Him who, because He can swear by no greater, swears by Himself, saying, "As I Live!"

And this brings us to say that, though the narrative does not record the covenant-oath as at this time uttered, yet must we understand that it was not really lacking. We have seen (1) that the words "covenant" and "oath" are synonymous; (2) that the ceremonial of dividing victims in twain was understood to lead up to the consummating act of swearing-in the covenant; and now (3) we may give references which formally attest that the land was conveyed by oath: Gen. xxiv. 7; l. 24; Exod. vi. 8; xxxiii. 1; Deut. i. 8; to which several others might be added.

Thus, then, is the promise of the land confirmed by solemn compact to Abram for his seed, as an everlasting possession. Thus is the seed itself still more assured; and with the land and seed, the outspreading of the Divine blessing is provided for; a channel is marked out through which Yehweh can put Himself into the bond, and bind a privileged seed and a ransomed world to Himself for ever. Abram asked how he was to understand his possessing the land. Here is the answer.

Joseph B. Rotherham.

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CONCERNING MATT. XXV. 46.

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

THIS is often taken as a "ruling" passage in support of the doctrine of eternal suffering, and therefore demands our special attention. At the outset we remark several objections against the inference. 1. The passage in 1 Thess. i. 7-9 is parallel, describing the same judgment scene; and the "destruction" there named will as naturally define the "punishment" named here, as it will be defined by it. And *more* naturally, if rare words should be explained by words more common. 2. Granting, for argument's sake, that "punishment" implies conscious suffering, it may be called "everlasting" with reference to its irreparable effect. Thus Psa. xxxiii. 17: "Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; let them be put to shame and perish." 3. The phrase "everlasting fire," used in verse 41, as already shown, denotes the eternity of effect. Whether the expression in verse 46 be taken in the same sense or not, it should not disagree with it. 4. The life which is contrasted suggests that the punishment may be strictly death. Whereas the common view deduces immortality from that which is opposed to "life eternal." 5. Various orthodox writers allow that final extinction would be an eternal punishment. 6. Besides these facts, which are more or less obvious, we hope to show that the word rendered "punishment" (*kolasis*) does not require the sense of conscious suffering.

We shall not at all insist on the acknowledged fact that the word eternal (*aionois*) is often used in a limited sense. Yet we might show a strong or even satisfactory argument for such a limitation, if the passage were not better explained otherwise. The common remark that the word is used in the absolute sense in the same verse, and that therefore the endless life of the righteous and the endless punishment of the wicked must stand or fall together, is not valid; for the general sense of "lifelong," or "during the continuance of the subject," which the word *aionois* doubtless bears, would admit a corresponding distinction in the future of those who "live for ever" and those who "perish." Indeed, if *kolasis* means *suffering*, the limited sense, or else the "eternity of effect," would be fairly suggested by verse 41, as already shown. Moreover, the same phrase precisely is used by Philo in speaking of a very limited duration. He says, "It is better not to promise at all than not to render prompt assistance. For in the former case no blame follows: but in the latter there is dissatisfaction from the weaker class, and a deep hatred and lasting punishment (*kolasis aionios*—mortal resentment?) from such as are powerful." (Fragm. Opp. ii. 667, ed. Mangey.)

Nor shall we raise any question of the genuineness of the text. Yet if any one would rest an infinitely appalling doctrine on a word, one or two things should be said. Christ spoke not in Greek, but Syro-Chaldaic. And, granting the inspiration of the evangelist, no one can disprove—what many believe—that he wrote in Hebrew, and that the Greek of his gospel is an uninspired translation. And for *kolasis* the Ethiopic gives "judgment" (*judicium*—Walton); the old Latin version gives *ignis* (fire); and Augustine and others frequently read *ambustionem* or *combustionem* (burning); which shows how little the original term

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was then relied on. We submit, therefore, that the *conjecture* of Dr. Mangey, that *katalusis* (annihilation) is the true reading, was not "impious," though *kausis* (burning), *kolasis* (cutting off), or *krisis* (judgment), would be more plausible as a conjecture. But we would not seem to dislike the received text. Nor shall we detain the reader with various senses of the word *kolasis*, such as "chastisement," "restraint," "abscission," which have been proposed. (See Debt and Grace, pp. 189, 190.) But we may express our surprise that so wary a writer as Mr. Landis should give such countenance to the sense last named as he does, saying, "The final state of the lost is here designated by the singularly appropriate term *kolasis;* punishment by *rejection*, or *cutting off from* or by *deprivation of* that happiness which the saved enjoy." (Immort. of Soul, p. 480.) If for "happiness" Mr. L. had used Christ's own word "life," all that he adds about "going away into" such "deprivation" would not at all even suggest the immortality of these thus "cut off." The sentence "depart" is solemn, dramatic, and contemplates not an *abode* in God's universe for the wicked, but an execution.

That suffering is here implied is strongly asserted by the writer in the *New Englander*, May, 1856, p. 171, who says *kolasis* is a verbal noun denoting action, and not result, a noun of infliction. And this is argued from 1 John iv. 18, when it occurs in the phrase "fear hath torment;" and from the Syriac, which gives in our passage a word rendered "torment" by Dr. Murdock.

But the Syriac will not prove the common view, even if it were an inspired version. For the word rendered "torment" has also the more general sense of "punishment;" and the verb also means to *suppress, submerge, suffocate, strangle.* It is rendered "punish" by Dr. Murdock in Acts iv. 21. And in 1 John iv. 18 the Syriac uses another word, rendered "existeth in peril." The Arabic also seems to have read *kolousin*, "constraint," which is preferred by Grotius and Schleusner. Hammond conjectures a similar word *kolusin*, "hindrance." Beausobre and L'Enfant explain the received reading thus: "Fear hath punishment ever before its eyes." The Vulgate gives simply *paenam*, "punishment." The translation of *kolasis* in 1 John iv. 18 by "torment" is nearly if not wholly without parallel, and is unsupported by the lexicographers. In Acts iv. 21 the verb *kolazo* occurs, and the context favours the sense of punishment with a view to "restraint" and prohibition. The work is used in one other place only in the New Testament, 2 Peter ii. 9. Here it occurs as a participle in the present tense (*kolazomenous*), rendered as future in our version: "The Lord knoweth how . . . to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment *to be punished.*" But the future tense is no more required by the context than by the word. The fourth verse is plainly parallel; the participle "to be reserved" (*teroumenous*, kept) there used is also in the present tense; and the same verb is in the *past* tense in the similar passage, Jude verse 6. If then the verb *kolazo* has at all the sense of to *repress* or *restrain*, the obvious and grammatical rendering here would be, "to reserve the unjust *confined* or *restrained*, unto the day of judgment." Yet ye shall not insist either on the sense of *restraint*, or on the present tense. We remark, however, that if the *future* tense be insisted on, that would indicate that the

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punishment begins with the judgment, and not before it. And then the final punishment may not be anguish of spirit, or any natural suffering, but something totally different." (Prof. Hudson's, Christ our Life, pp. 122-125.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

GOOD NEWS FROM DR. PETAVEL, OF GENEVA.

MY DEAR SIR,—You will be glad to hear that *La Semaine Religieuse*, which is the chief evangelical paper of French Switzerland, has just given up the traditional dogma, and advocated Conditional Immortality. Two leaders to that effect have been written by the late editor, Pastor Mittendorff. This friend of mine is now preparing a third article, and has the intention of publishing it with the preceding ones, in the pamphlet form. Not long since, Pastor Edw. Delon, of Pranles, wrote to me that he read a paper upon this subject in the annual meeting of the French evangelical pastors at Marseilles; and that his views, which are nearly ours, were shared by a large majority of his colleagues.

With kind remembrances, believe me to remain, yours very truly, E. PETAVEL.

So far Dr. Petavel. The following is from another hand:—

The above-mentioned Synod at Marseilles, which was held in October last, comprised not only pastors, but laymen of great weight and experience. Among the clergy there were pastors from Paris and Lyons who rank among the most pronounced Protestants in France. The nimble intellect of the French nation, so quick to apprehend the essential in all the facts of life, must have rendered the debate on immortality an occasion of vivid interest; and might, one would think, administer a wholesome stimulus to some of our "hard and fast" theologians, but for the fact that they seem resolved never to wake till destruction has them by the throat. The sitting which was devoted to a "Report and Conference" on the subject of Life in Christ, adopted as its basis Messieurs Byse and Petavel's French translation of Mr. Edward White's book on that subject—a work of which we may say, that having already acquired an European reputation, and having been anxiously and studiously noticed in all the leading French theological journals, it admirably fulfilled all the requirements of the hour. The author of the report was Monsieur Delon aforesaid, pastor at Pranles, in the Department of Ardèche. It strongly favoured the views taken in Mr. White's book, both as against the traditional opinion, and as opposed to Universalism.

After it was read a free discussion took place, in which, as might naturally be expected, some pastors warmly espoused the traditional belief; but on the other hand, several, both clergy and laity, supported M. Delon's opinion. I have good authority for stating that the general result of the Conference, and still more of the private discourse held by the members of the Synod, was to reveal an overwhelming preponderance of

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opinion as against the dogma of endless torment and against Universalism, and in support of a disposition to regard favourably the view that immortality is the peculiar privilege of the regenerate portion of mankind.

If this be not a revolution in progress, I, for one, would like to know what moral upturning merits the appellation? If the pastors of England still resolve to set their faces against it, they will find themselves ere long in the rear. A German theologian of princely capacity, but whose name I feel hardly at liberty to divulge, while taking no dogmatic ground on the subject of immortality, and preferring at present to hold a position of suspense, has nevertheless declared in a private message to one of the translators, that Mr. White's view is much to be preferred to the theory of the final restitution of all things, for that it much better recognises the rights of man's freedom and of God's justice. The book itself he pronounces "very respectable, earnest, and thoroughly scientific."

This verdict of the German doctor is not destined to fall to the ground. Some of us are prepared to go even further, and to assign to the third edition of the *Life in Christ* a pre-eminence over every attempt at systematic theology which has appeared since the Apostolic age. Nor need this be regarded as a startling assertion. It is a question of symmetry, not of bulk; and symmetry depends upon truthful proportion. If, as many of us ardently believe, the ponderous ecclesiastical cyclopedias hitherto given to the world have all more or less been damaged by a fundamental psychological error, then there would be every reason to expect that a system which had recovered the Biblical law of life would exhibit a logical sequence and a coherence of structure, utterly unattainable before. Such is the honour due to this carefully elaborated treatise. I wonder not that it has sprung a mine simultaneously on professional torpor and on infidel security. It has taught the teachers wherein their weakness long lay; and on the other hand, the assailants of the Faith start to discover that their position is no longer tenable on a glacis which is swept by artillery of unsuspected precision. Meanwhile—and at this we are not at all surprised—the argument is found to be eminently attractive to men of simple hearts, and the common people hear it gladly.

To what then are we to attribute the fact that such a book has attracted more affectionate regard on the Continent than in Great Britain, and has been less noticed by the author's dissenting brethren at home than by the national clergy of the land? The day is swiftly coming when this reticence will redound but little to their credit.

Yet while I ask the question, I am checked by the recollection of a feature in Rubens' beautiful portrait of Thomas d'Aquinas. It is a scene in the life of the saint which the painter has depicted in the background. He kneels in adoration; while from the Cross a radiance streams in upon his spirit pencilled with the words, "*Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma.*" Will not this suffice? J. Waylen.

THE HEBREW WORTHIES.

Dear Sir,—May I be allowed to point out a discrepancy in the letter of "G. J. S." (last Rainbow) with the words of the Apostle Paul?

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"G. J. S." says, referring to the Hebrew worthies, "They now rest from their labours till the resurrection morn shall call them forth to receive their reward. Then we, who *before that* shall have been caught up to the Lord in the air will *welcome them*, and we and they shall together be perfected" (the italics are mine). I read in 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, "And the *dead* in Christ shall rise *first: then we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up together with *them* in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *If*, according to the Apostle, the dead are raised *first*, and if the space of time intervening between the raising of the dead and the translation of the living will admit of it, it is the risen saints, being first, who will be able to give a welcome to those who are translated, and not "vice versa," as your correspondent incorrectly puts it. Yours faithfully,

Oxford. CHAS. UNDERHILL.

THE SEALED ONES.

SIR,—Permit me to ask Mr. Starkey, with reference to his statement on page 76 of your last issue, for Scriptural authority, when he pronounces the 144,000 sealed ones of Rev. vii. to be "not the seed of Jacob after the flesh," but characteristically representative of "The Bridegroom and Bride."

A rather indefinite allusion is made at the opening of the paper to certain "New Testament Scriptures," which Mr. Starkey says enable us to "understand who are the tribes of the children of Israel" in Rev. vii. 4. But I fail to see how those Scriptures, thus vaguely pointed to, give the same meaning to the passage in Rev. vii. that Mr. Starkey does, but rather an opposite one. Rom. ii. 28, 29, is alluded to, but, in the first place, a *Christian* is not a *Jew*, either outwardly or inwardly, according to Gal. iii. 28, though by faith he is a true child of Abraham (ver. 26). The Apostle in the verses of Rom. ii. above, is concluding an argument to show what in chap. i. he proved with regard to the Gentile, that the Jew by nature is in a condition of inexcusable guilt in the sight of God, so that "an election of grace" only will be saved (Rom. xi. 5), i.e., as the same Apostle says in Rom. xi. 26, "all" who, when "The Deliverer shall come out of Sion," are *then* of "Israel shall be saved." And this is exactly the time and circumstance *unto which* the 144,000 of Rev. vii. are sealed.

Mr. Starkey says that "God has had no dealings in grace with the Jews, nor will He have *during this age*." This is not Scriptural, for the present gathering into the Body of Christ is of both *Jew* and Gentile. If Mr. Starkey had said God has no dealings with Israel, *nationally*, during this age, he would have been correct, for the sealing of the tribes is an act denoting their hidden state *at present in view of* their future manifestation as "servants" (Isa. lxv. 9). The numeral 144,000 is symbolic.

"The light of the New Testament Scriptures" does, indeed, tell us "who the tribes of the children of Israel are," which Mr. Starkey will find in Rom. ix.—xi., notably among many others. "God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew," and a sincere desire to learn His purposes will be rewarded by a search into the last five chapters of Ezekiel, but particularly the previous xxxvi. and xxxvii. Israel as the *seed of Jacob*, must yet "take root, blossom, and bud, and *fill the face of the world with fruit*"

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(Isa. xxvii. 5), which is a prophetic announcement of the "great multitude" in salvation robes sealed *under the same seal* as Israel in Rev. vii., foreseen standing before the Millennial Throne.

Finally, will Mr. Starkey say why the Spirit of Truth has omitted the tribe of Dan from the list of the tribes in Rev. vii., but inserted it with the other tribes in the account of the future allotment of the land, in Ezek. xlviii. 1, where he comes first?

Inserted also by the mouth of Moses in pronouncing the *future* characters of the several tribes? (Deut. xxxiii). Inserted also by the mouth of their Father Jacob in declaring the prominent features of his sons as representing the several characteristics of the entire nation from first to last?

I am, faithfully yours,
H. GOODWYN.

Literature.

The Battle of Unbelief. By the Rev. GAVIN CARLYLE, M.A., Author of "The Light of All Ages," Editor of "The Collected Writings of Edward Irving." London: Hodder and Stoughton.

"THE minds of men are everywhere agitated at present by religious questions." Thus Mr. Carlyle begins his praiseworthy effort to do battle for what he deems truth, against "scientific materialism and religious scepticism." He uses some well-directed arguments in favour of Christianity, "as the one distinctively Divine religion coming from heaven," and, of course, against the class of critics who try to get rid of the supernatural. But one of the weapons with which he fights is so rusty, that we advise him for his own sake to beware of it. We refer to the piece of ordnance labeled "immortal soul." He has said much about this, but proof that there is such a thing he has none, for there is none in existence. Of the first preacher of that doctrine our Lord says, "He is a liar, and the father of it." To believe in conditional immortality, it appears, is "childish." Well, be it so; we are content; for we remember gratefully who said, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." On the subject of the millennium we are amazed to find the editor of the collected writings of the illustrious Irving so hopelessly at sea. Of course that great man, with the eagle eye and outspread wing, burning with holy zeal for the glory of his Master, needs a kindred soul properly to appreciate him; but we take the liberty of assuring Mr. Carlyle that the agency on which he relies for the introduction of the millennium will never bring it. "The LORD HIMSELF" must "*descend from heaven*" before the millennium of Scripture can shed a ray of its glory upon the world.

NOTICES.

"B." (India) says: "I cannot close this note without thanking you for all the benefits and blessings we have received from your most valuable periodical the RAINBOW. May you live long to herald the hidden truths of God's Word, which theology, tradition, and priestcraft have almost buried in oblivion. The Lord be praised for giving you the courage and endurance to exhume the blessed truths of Life in the Christ, The Advent, &c., and proclaim them to His honour and glory!"

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

APRIL, 1881.

IMMUTABILITY OF DIVINE DESIGNS.

THE purpose of God involves the subserviency of evil to good; whilst the character of the former, and the consequent accountability of those who commit sin, remains unchanged, the proposition is indirectly anticipated that the eternal design will certainly be accomplished. For if evil be made, as a dark contrast, to exhibit more evidently the intense light of that system of redemption against which it is apparently set; if its opposition be reduced to the mere negative position of hostile will without inherent power; and if all the havoc it has made in the earth be but the exposition of its innate malice against the righteous authority of the infinitely wise and gracious God, then there remains nothing to defeat the eternal purpose of "His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." Whatever changes may take place upon the face of society, the invisible hand which conducts all processes to the great purposed end, is continually at work. There is neither retrocession nor intermission in His great work. If He appear to allow the wicked to triumph at their will, it is but to make manifest the inherent wickedness that is in man. The lashing waves of human passion will neither wear the surface nor change the position of the Rock of Ages. Rebellion may erect its insurrectionary standards on many a shore; but the government of God is secure as the pillars of His throne; its foundations are more lasting than the eternal hills; and the ultimate vindication of His claims to universal loyalty is one of the immutable purposes of His mind. He will be His own apologist. He will plead His own cause. If He seem to delay the execution threatened against unrighteousness, or to postpone the fulfilment of His promises to the Church, neither the one nor the other is to be interpreted into forgetfulness. The former is the proof of forbearance, as He is not willing that any should perish; the latter is a trial of faith, that patience may have her perfect work. But there is no delay in consequence of unforeseen difficulties; for there are none. There

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is no waiting to ascertain the issue of an experiment; for He makes no experiments. There is no change of plan in consequence of actual occurrences; for He is of one mind. And though we often speak of time protracted, and dwell with emphasis on the duration of an age, it is to be remembered that before Him "it is nothing." Uninterrupted as the perennial spring, and sure as the polar influence, the majestic plan of redemption proceeds towards its wonderful issue. "He stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumults of the people." Those who have faith in Him need not therefore fear, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, and though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." It is theirs to take up the song:

"We have a strong city:
Salvation shall God appoint for walls and bulwarks.
Open ye the gates and let the righteous nation enter;
Constant in the truth, stayed in mind:
Thou shalt preserve them in perpetual peace,
Because they have trusted in Thee."

And the utterance of His gracious purpose towards His people, together with His challenge to all opposing powers, may be expressed in the inspired words:

"In that day shall Jehovah punish with His sword,
His well-tempered, and great, and strong sword;
Leviathan, that fleet serpent,
Even Leviathan, the winding serpent;
Yea, He will slay the monster that is in the sea.
In that day sing unto the vineyard a responsive song.
I Jehovah am its keeper;
Every moment I water it;
Lest any one should assault it,
Day and night do I guard it.
I will be angry with it no more.
But let me reach the briers and thorns,
And I will go against them in battle,
And I will burn them up together." *

The wall may be built in troublous times, but its completion is certain. Every kind of opposition was foreseen. Provision was made against all that the world calls contingency. The strength of every adversary was measured from eternity. And though nothing has been done either to check the free agency of man, or to suspend the connection between cause and effect, either to set aside the accountability attaching to voluntary action, or to change the essential nature of guilt, yet as the light rushes from its source irrespective of the body on which it may fall, and as the stream flows from its fountain irrespective of the substance over which it may roll in its course, so has the eternal purpose of the

* Isa. xxvii. 1-4.

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God of Salvation been unfolding itself through the ages and the generations that are past, and so will it continue until all opposition shall be either merged into compliance, or bound into chains, that it may "deceive the nations no more!"

Against innumerable enemies has Christianity maintained its position, and thus far made its way. Persecution, open, undisguised, and professedly hostile to the very name of Jesus of Nazareth, has brought forth its resources, plied its strength, grown weary of its toil, and failed. Heresy, poisonous, serpent-like, has coiled and trailed amongst the trees of the garden of life, until its very existence has become a burden to itself. Antichrists in many a form have urged their doctrines on the attention of men, but the evangelic code still claims pre-eminence, and brings forth in many a spot the vouchers for its claim in its Divine spirituality and purity. Popery—that monstrous composition of paganism, worldliness, and Christianity—has for many ages usurped the name of the Church, spread its veil over the nations, and multiplied its abominations by the aid of secular governments; but even it has had to withdraw its pretensions when the Word of the Lord had free course, and to quail before a light too intense for its earthly eye. And the *literal Antichrist*, the man of sin—the wicked one—the son of perdition—for whose manifestation this fell apostasy has been preparing the way through dreary centuries, has yet to appear on the earth, the most fearful enemy that ever has confronted, or ever will confront the glorious Christ. But even he—though the concentration of all apostasies, and the incarnation of Satan—shall come in contact with a power that will ensure his speedy and signal overthrow. For it is he "*whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall* DESTROY WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING."*

But we may not pass from the past to the future without noticing the intermediate present. To a mind deeply imbued with Christian principle, and moved by the benevolence which the Gospel inspires, the present state of the world and of the Church presents much that is suggestive, much that is painful, and, but for firm faith in the accomplishment of God's purposes, much that is alarming. There are few spots on which the eye can look with unmingled complacency, few redeeming points in the general derangement, and few places on which the sole of the foot can securely rest. And were it not that change, religious indifference, intellectual scepticism, national revolutions, famines and pestilence, are the predicted heralds of the second coming of the Great Healer and Restorer, the believer in the Gospel and the earnest friend of man might sit in sackcloth and ashes, with folded hands and downcast eye.

What are the facts? The world is fearfully agitated. It rocks

* 2 Thess. ii. 8.

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from its centre. Commotion is universal. There is no visible check. "The wisdom of the ancients" is gone. It commands no attention, it stills no tempest, it arrests no ear, it sheathes no sword. Experience has been recorded in vain. Her admonitions are like the curling smoke, her folios are piled dust, her philosophy is "vain jangling," her oracles are impracticable enigmas. Politics have ceased to be a science. The ancient landmarks are lost. The polar star is quenched. Precedent is forgotten in the passion for change; or, if named, it is but to awake the banter and provoke the sneer of political scepticism. This passion for change is universal; and "it has its reward!" It unsettles everything, and composes nothing. It undermines the ancient structures, and rapidly raises others in their places, to be undermined with equal rapidity. Its work of yesterday it destroys to-day. It builds beacons on the sand, which the next tide of its own passion engulfs. It proclaims constitutions, which, ere the ink be dry upon the parchment, it tears to shreds. It denounces tyranny, and acts the despot. It condemns war, and unsheathes the sword. It proclaims fraternity, and severs the most tender ties of brotherhood. It preaches kindness, and practises oppression. It proscribes superstition, and cherishes the apostasy. It pretends to reconstruct society, but its work is that of the destroyer. It points to a new disposition of the materials of society, which shall be harmonious as the colours of the covenant-bow, but judging from the specimens it has exhibited, the most indulgent spectator of its great experiment is compelled to say, "The old is better!"

Are we the apologists of hereditary despotism, of crowned injustice, or sceptred tyranny? believers in the infallibility of ancestral wisdom? vouchers for the perfection of human thrones? weepers over the destiny of fugitive absolutism? enemies of the people, or foes of liberty? No! We would not thus apostatise from principles which draw their vitality from a holier spring than ever welled from beneath an earthly throne! But there is no theory propounded in these statements. Is the brief description—purposely and necessarily very brief—of the *actual* state of things correct?

Is the state of philosophy better? Shall we obtain relief from the learned, and quaff repose from the streams of literature? Shall we sit at the feet of sages, and find a refuge from the storm and tempest? "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" As surely as in the days of Paul! Philosophy has spread out no covering for the exposed, has paved no highway for the pilgrim, has arched no bridge across the yawning chasm. She is not "a guide of the blind," for she herself is confessedly lost in the mazes of doubt and uncertainty. Her voice is many-tongued; her directions are contradictory; her theorems are guesses; her facts hypothetical. Her inductions of yesterday are

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set aside to-day, and those of to-day will be exploded to-morrow. Her labour is in the fires, and the light she yields, whilst discoloured and unsteady, is effectual only to the extent of making darkness visible. She has evidently received no new commission, except it be *once again to certify to humanity that she cannot help it.* Her first principles require antecedents. Her deepest researches scratch but the surface of the soil which is supposed to conceal the remedy for human woe. Her experiments tend only to irritate the sufferer. Her prescriptions, couched in modern phrase, are but the ancient compounds which partially conceal the symptoms, whilst they undermine the system. Her mental worship is but the avatar of an old idolatry. And her modern pantheism is but the resurrection of rabble deities which have been buried in oblivion for two thousand years; a resurrection which would not have taken place but for the groanings of humanity for something which it has not yet learned to name, to soothe its anguish, and to alleviate its woe. But still "creation travails in pain," and philosophy can work no deliverance in the earth! It abounds in sectaries. It has no common centre. Every new candidate for its honours brings a new light destined to be eclipsed by that of his immediate successor. Its transcendentalism is impalpable, its doctrines incoherent, its precepts impracticable. We may admire its industry, and allow the excellence of its motives, and place upon its brow the laurel of ability; but here we stop; for it has not justified its pretensions. It has not infused new life into a paralysed world; it has not redeemed mind from either ignorance or superstition; it has not removed the huge deformities of society; it has not cemented the rents and fissures of the social fabric; it has not healed the breach, nor leaped into the gulf, nor stayed the plague; and we are sure it never can. As a commentator upon existing phenomena, it has done some service; as a teacher its office is at an end! When it enters into the temple, and offers sacrifice with strange fire, and changes the place of the shekinah, and prescribes laws for inspiration, and casts doubt upon miracle, and questions the appositeness of Christian doctrine to "the advanced state" of humanity, it is time to protest, and cry, "Take it hence!" It neither understands nor can it meet the case of man. His complaint baffles its resources. He needs inspection by the eye, and redemption by the hand, that were employed in his creation. Knowledge less complete cannot determine his disease; inferior power cannot effect his cure!

The state of the churches must not be overlooked. At home there are few conversions; abroad, little progress. The most serious and earnest spirits are the most anxious. Men are wondering what is coming on the earth. In established and dissenting churches alike, a crisis is deemed at hand. Great changes are expected; but their character, shape, and form, no one ventures to prophesy. The general belief, or more properly the general hope,

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is that these commotions will issue in the long-promised period of universal Christianity; the rapid extension of the Gospel over the whole earth; the destruction of idolatry, both in its pagan and nominally Christian forms; the dawning of the world's jubilee, the evening-time of light, the sabbatic year, the blessed millennium. That such will be the issue is certain as "the sure word of prophecy" can make it; but, with great deference to those who think otherwise, we submit that it does not appear to us to be the doctrine of Scripture, that the earth will be "filled with the knowledge of the Lord" until after His second coming to our world, "without sin unto salvation,"—"to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

All Christians believe in the second advent of their Redeemer. The only question that divides them on this subject is, When? Will His return be *pre-millennial* or *post-millennial?* Will He come to judge the world, as that term is *generally* understood, to wind up the affairs of time, to put an end to the mediatorial system, and then return to heaven? or will He come to set up His glorious kingdom, to claim the earth as His possession, to redeem creation from its groanings, to banish the curse which sin introduced, and to restore paradise to more than its primitive glory as the dwelling-place of His saints for a period sufficiently long to vindicate all His claims, and to fulfil all those glowing promises to His Church which confessedly have this earth as the scene of their fulfilment? These are the questions. It will be admitted that, instead of a series of arguments as to the comparative advantages or disadvantages of these opinions respectively, the duty of every Christian is to ascertain what is written, and to bow implicitly to that. Without entering, therefore, on a vindication of the conclusion to which the study of the subject has brought us, we may state in a few words that the thick veil which is purposely cast over the "day and hour" of His return, together with "the signs" which are to precede it, many of which are remarkably similar to those characteristics of the present state of the world and the Church which have just been noted, and the fact that the sublime things which are spoken of the latter day seem dependent upon His return, while in no case are they introduced among the preceding signs, have led us to the conclusion that that wonderful event may take place at no very distant day. May it be so!

DIVINE PEACE IN HUMAN HEARTS.*

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."—Col. iii. 15.

PEACE! What a charm this word has! It needs no formal introduction, no letter of commendation, no grammatical defi-

* A Sermon. By the Editor.

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nition; for its sweet name is its herald, at the mention of which thousands of human hearts are eager to receive it. There are disturbed, disquieted hearts in the world, many of them, hearts which are the theatres of wearying and wearing war, and which sigh even to breaking because lips which vowed blessing on that fair nuptial morning have since spoken bitter things which have robbed life of its beauty and made home desolate. O how these yearn with an inexpressible longing for peace!

There are hearts of righteous men burdened with stern difficulties which they cannot conquer, notwithstanding earnest self-denying effort, their plans habitually failing, as if some mysterious fate—to use a pagan phrase—had made them the butt of its cruel shafts. Such men suffer keenly. The unprincipled man is utterly incapable of appreciating, because incapable of conceiving, the sharp sorrow of the righteous man when he finds it impossible to do as he would in relation to social and commercial obligations. The principles of truth and integrity which he has made the law of his life as a citizen, make his burden all the heavier, from the mere fact that he admires that law. Great injustice is often done to good and true men under such circumstances. The comments of those who know not their moral integrity suggest dishonesty, carelessness, extravagance, hypocrisy, or some other evil thing as the cause of their difficulties. Job's censors have a large following. That school of critics has lived through the ages, and is as unscrupulous and merciless as ever. There are rogues in abundance, a vast crop of human weeds that care for nothing but to minister to their own noxious existence. But there are also holy men who do *not* prosper in the world. The Lord help them! They need the peace of my text.

And there are hearts pained and troubled to the verge of agony by the self-consciousness of sin. They feel that all is wrong between them and God. The question, "What shall I do to be saved?" is the vehement outcry of an alarmed conscience. They are terribly in earnest, for they find that sin is a deadly poison, and with intense desire they wish to escape the fatal issue, if that be possible. Bitterness of this kind cannot be endured long; it is a storm which will rend the reason if not removed soon; but here, too, Divine grace has its grand remedy, for Divine peace is ready to enter and still the tempest.

I have thus selected three representative cases—the domestic, the social, and the religious—for the purpose of leading up to the text and showing its perfect fulness of blessing to each. These troubled hearts may all be ruled by the peace of God. The storm can be hushed, and the tempest lulled into a calm. Blessed be the Lord, this is no mere guess, or wish, in which a benevolent man would fain indulge for the purpose of soothing his tried brethren, but an absolute fact attested by the experience of countless numbers through many generations.

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Although doctrinally it matters not whether the word "God" or "Christ" was written by the apostle,—for in the outflowing graces of redeeming love the Father and the Son are assuredly "One,"—yet it is right to mention that the latter is probably the word he used. Thus, says Alford, "the peace of Christ; so all the most ancient authorities." Our modern critical scholars are agreed on this matter. We are thus gratefully reminded of the precious legacy of our Lord: "Peace I leave with you; *My peace I give unto you.*" Is not this then the holy boon of our text? In all difference of opinion let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts as the umpire or judge; and thus quietness will be secured without interfering with the liberty of individual conviction. But as in this case the rule for the "body" is obviously the rule for each member—for how otherwise can it be an authority "in hearts?"—I propose to take it so, and apply it:—

I. *To domestic grief.*

O what a chaos, what a storm-tossed region this points to! Home *should* be the happiest spot on earth; the domestic circle should be the sanctuary of peace and love. God meant it to be so, wished it to be so; but Divine wishes and human wills are, in a mournful number of instances, at variance. I touch here the margin of a very old controversy to which I shall not contribute a word, for it is worn out and forgotten—that of sovereignty on God's part, and freedom of will on man's. I have no difficulty in reconciling these, but that is not my duty now. I am dealing with facts, and it is a fact that God desires domestic peace, and in thousands of cases sees domestic war. Untrained tempers, selfishness, and a want of consideration for the feelings of others, are among the many causes of discord which make the narrow circle of home a perpetual martyrdom to any one in such a circle—husband, wife, son, daughter—who has tasted the grace of Christ and yearns for the quietness in which that grace finds its genial atmosphere.

But can the peace of Christ rule in a heart surrounded with the discordant elements of a house divided against itself? Yes. Certainly. And it is then unspeakably valuable, prized beyond price. The heart then rests on its Lord, leans on its Beloved, draws its quiet inward joy from the fountain of His grace, and feels that He is better than husband, wife, brother, sister, an unfailing Friend—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!" Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that if Christ be not "all" He is nothing; and perhaps in "the ministry of evil"—in the control of which for beneficent ends the wisdom of God is so remarkably manifested—domestic griefs are overruled by grace for a closer communion between the Christian heart and its Lord. Divisions on religious subjects foretold by Christ, have caused through many generations, distressing divisions in families. "Think not,"—said the great Prophet, looking down the ages and seeing how friendship for Him would entail both domestic and social persecution—"Think not

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that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. x. 34–39).

Upon the other hand, there are many cases in which natural family love is divinely ennobled by the Christian graces in the hearts and daily lives of all the members of the family. I have frequently seen this domestic picture and gazed upon it with admiration and gratitude. How beautiful it is! Father, mother, sons, daughters—sun, moon, and stars of the home system—all bright with the light that radiates from the face of Christ upon those that love Him. A holy family! What a testimony it is to the gospel of the grace of God! These are "living epistles," commentaries in which a spiritual man can read the sign-manual of his Prince, without the laboured logic of professional commentators with its legal thunders and vindictive horrors. I like to see Christ in living men, the Master in His disciples, the Leader in His followers. This is how *He* puts it: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. . . A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. . . Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. . . This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

How love glows in the heart and beams in the eye of the Speaker, as these words of surpassing charm fall from His lips! He longs to secure our entire confidence that He may breathe His love into us, that we may love Him in turn, and that His peace "may rule in our hearts." Christ, the wonderfully unselfish One who became poor that we through His poverty might be rich, and who looked not on His own things but on the things of others, is also wonderfully covetous. He yearns for our love, desires it supremely, covets it as His great wealth. Why? *Because* He loves us. Is not this answer sufficient to account for the Gospel in its entirety and in all its details? Yes; but there is even more than this; something farther on along the line of the Redeemer's thoughts as He looked forward to the age of glory. Again the covetous One becomes unselfish; for we find that His object in loving us and in seeking our love was to make us poor, sinful mortals, pure, holy,

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happy, immortal in and with Himself for ever. "Herein is love" indeed!

II. Let us look at the resources of our text *in relation to social cares.*

It is sad, but true, and sad because true, that "religion" is supposed by multitudes to mean merely attention to certain ecclesiastical services on Sundays and holy days. The action and influence of Divine truth on heart and life is not understood by them as a constant power regulating the conduct—a power which has to do not with Sundays and holy days, but with the man himself as a moral and responsible being. This erroneous view of "religion"—as it is loosely called—has had the effect of separating the social and secular aspects of human life from the religious, as if we could be devoutly Christian men on the first day of the week, and eager Mammonites on the other six. This makes Christianity a dead ceremony, not a living power; a thing outside of us that dwells apart until we please to go and render it formal homage, instead of the life of Christ within, the holy fire ever glowing in the heart and guiding the man in all his duties and cheering him in all his trials. The idea of taking religion into mercantile affairs, and asking God to guide them in business, is considered by these men a piece of Puritanic fanaticism from which "rational Christians" will stand apart. They have too much respect for religion to do this. They will not drag it down from its ecclesiastical heights to defile itself by contact with commercial affairs. It is beautiful in Church, but it would be out of place on 'change. It is quite at home in Bible and Prayer-book, but it must not soil its pure fingers by touching cash book and ledger.

Of course it would be a shameful neglect of duty if we did not fully and cheerfully admit that *many* of those who feel and act thus are nevertheless men of sterling integrity and truthfulness, upright as the palm tree and transparent as a sunbeam—men who would scorn an act of meanness as beneath the dignity of manhood and the honour of respectable citizenship. Still, even if *all* who confine religion to her Sunday ceremonies were of the character to which we thus render homage, which is very far from being the case, there are two matters of great importance which the Christian teacher is bound to bring to the front. The first relates to a right view of the Gospel, the second to the enjoyment of its comforts under trial.

1. The holy faith with which our merciful God has favoured us is not a thing of time or place, of ceremony or form, of ritual or human priesthood. It is a transforming power, a life, a Divine energy moulding the individual into the likeness of Christ, his Redeemer. It cannot, from its very nature, dwell in cathedral, church, or chapel. It refuses all domicile but the human heart; but once it nestles there it goes cheerfully with the man who lovingly admits it as his guest, whether his work be to sweep a crossing or to sway the destinies of an empire.

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2. It comforts those who receive it in their hearts. As a tenant there it "pays well!" With all affection I press this point. I know sorrow, and I know what is meant by the peace of Christ in the midst of sorrow. I am able therefore to speak of it as altogether beyond price when dark clouds are overhead, and the eye is dim, and the soul oppressed. Now I wish all men of business understood—as some of them whom I know and esteem happily understand—that amidst the "worry," and care, and unhappy rivalries, and competition of commerce they may have a heavenly power in the soul that will keep them calm and self-possessed happen what may. Panic, bankruptcy, ruin, are grim words that require no explanation. Their meaning is only too clear. A millionaire in the morning, a pauper at night, is a tremendous thing; but why should despair and suicide close the story of such an awful day? If Divine peace rule the heart the gold that has taken wing will not rob the man of his true treasure. God is better than gold; perfect peace preserves the soul that relies on Him; and to be a joint heir with the Heir of all things is infinitely more than a compensation for the wealth that was swallowed in the commercial earthquake. God changes not. Make Him your portion—the joy and glory of your mind and heart—every day, every hour, always, and social and worldly trials will prove but temporary tests of character leaving eternal blessing behind.

III. *In relation to our highest interest the counsel of the text is invaluable.*

See how suggestive the context is of the quiet and calm that result from the Christian graces: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

Mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, charity! What a precious cluster around the central grace of Divine peace reigning in the heart! The man of whom these things can be affirmed is a copy of Christ. For him Christ died not, rose not, in vain. The character of the Redeemer seen in the redeemed is the unquestionable proof that they are the children of God, "holy and beloved;" and, of course, that the teaching of the New Testament respecting the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord is *true*, emphatically and infallibly TRUE; for no fable, however cunningly

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devised, *could* translate men from a state of darkness and sin into one of light and holiness. The impartation of the character described in this radiant paragraph is the gracious work of Him whose name is "Light." Thus we have the transformation fully accounted for in language of beauty in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "You also, who were dead by reason of your trespasses and your sins; wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience: among whom we also all had our way of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, performing the desires of our flesh and of our thoughts; and we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye have been saved;) and raised us up together with Him, and made us sit together with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that He might show forth in the ages which are to come the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: of God is the gift: not of works, in order that no man should boast. For we are His handiwork, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God before prepared that we should walk in them."

His handiwork,—"His workmanship;"—*that* accounts for it. Human nature requires the touch of the Divine hand if upon it epistles of Christ are to be written. What clearer proof of his apostleship could Paul give than that which is contained in the following words: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some epistles of commendation to you, or from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men, manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor. iii. 1–3).

If men sought proof of Christ speaking in His servant, here it is. The evidence is conclusive and Divine.

But now, I ask in conclusion, may we not all have this peace of Christ in our hearts? Has He encumbered the legacy with hard conditions? Have we works to do, or price to pay, to get this blessed guest to dwell in us? May we not have it with its accompanying graces to assure us that we are God's children, to gladden our lives, and to beautify our characters? What hinders? Absolutely nothing but our shameful, stupid, suicidal unbelief. Sin is put away. God is well pleased in His glorious Son. We are not under law but grace. Let us not make a stumbling block of the marvellous simplicity and freeness of the Gospel. Everything is prepared for us. The Giver of salvation loves us; the gift is offered to us, including all the graces that purify and adorn character now, and train for glorious service in the world to come. Take it and be happy! Amen.

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THE OBJECT OF REVELATION.

JOHN xx. 31.

1. WE bless Thee for Thy Word,
Our very gracious Lord,
By which we know
That Thou rejoicest still,
According to Thy will,
Grace to bestow.

2. Thy nature is the source
Of this delightful force,
Which finds in man
The object of its aim,
A sinner to reclaim,
As Jesus can.

3. Lord, help us so to live,
As evidence to give
That we are Thine.
Delivered from the night,
The children of the light,
With grace to shine.

4. Help us, our holy Head,
To live upon the bread
That comes from Thee;
Then shall our lives proclaim,
That it is lasting fame
Thy friends to be!

THETA.

NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

No. II.

THE FIRST SIX SEALS.

HAVING thus been shown the condition of the Seven Churches of Asia, which perhaps may fairly be taken as typical of the general state and condition of other professing churches at the same period—and having been instructed both to warn and comfort his brethren in the faith, the Apostle now leaves "the things which are" and goes on to the things which shall be after them.

The Apostle then is at once caught up to Heaven and sees the glory of God and the living ones who surround the Throne. The imagery of the vision corresponds with that in Ezekiel, and teaches us that "though clouds and darkness are round about God's

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throne," yet there are times and seasons when to some at least that darkness is made luminous, and we are assured that in spite of all appearances to the contrary in this world, God never deserts nor forsakes the works of His hands, but is ever present in the minutest things and is thoroughly and completely cognizant of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We learn moreover that God's will is done completely and thoroughly in Heaven, and encouraged in the hope, nay the certainty, that this will also be the case in earth when once the Lord has taken to Himself His great power and reigns.

After ascriptions of praise and glory have been given to God, the Apostle sees in the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne, a book written within and without, sealed with seven seals. When none are found worthy even to look upon the book, the Seer, we are told, wept much. He was earnestly desirous to know what was in store for his brethren of the church, and yet now that the time for that knowledge was apparently come, he seemed doomed to disappointment. His faith and patience must be tried by this apparent disappointment, before the secrets of futurity can be unveiled to him, yet by this very thing he is taught that now with his Saviour nothing is impossible. From the circumstance that he wept much I assume that some considerable time must have elapsed before the Lamb is seen among the elders round about the throne. The Lamb, who is represented as having seven horns and seven eyes, is now shown as possessing "all power both in heaven and in earth." Upon His taking the Book out of the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne all heaven rejoices, and with exultant praises gives glory to God and to His Christ, proving to us how exceedingly great is the reward of those who fear God, and how marvellously grand are the results ultimately to be brought about by the life and death of the Messiah. From the mention of "golden vials full of incense which are the prayers of saints," it may be justly concluded that the prayers and praises of those who serve God are acceptable and well pleasing to our Father in Heaven, and that in deed and in truth, to use the words of the Psalmist, their prayers "ascend up as incense, and the lifting up of their hands as the evening sacrifice." Is it not then an "encouragement to us to pray without ceasing" when we know that our prayers become as it were incense before the throne of God?

The "living creatures," as we are told in Rev. v. 9, represent the redeemed "out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." They are the first fruits of creation, and prove to us the truth of St. Peter's words, "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him" (Acts x. 35). We are next told that these redeemed ones are to be made unto God *kings and priests*, and to reign on the earth. Surely the word "kings" implies that they are to have subjects, and the word "priests" that they are to minister to "them that are ignorant and out of the way,"

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and to sinners also when repentant. They must have an office analogous to the kingly and priestly upon earth, and hence we *may* and I think *must* conclude that "in the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" there will be a magnificent field of operations opened up to them. They will be "repairers of the breach and restorers of paths to dwell in;" and, as I venture to think, the result of their labours is seen in verse 13, where "every creature in heaven and in earth" is found praising and glorifying God.

We now pass on to chapter vi., which may be said to be the commencement of the series of visions relating to the future; *i.e.*, the future after the time at which St. John lived, and we find that the first thing done was the opening of the seals one by one.

When the first seal is opened we hear as it were the noise of thunder, implying apparently the great importance of what was going on, and also directing our earnest and serious attention to it. "And I saw and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer." Here, I think, we cannot fail to recognise our Lord Himself, both because he is seated on a white horse, the emblem of purity combined with power, and also from the triumphal crown on His head. All this no doubt represents the success and victory of our Lord in the ages immediately succeeding His crucifixion. It is as it were "the early rain" which was to fertilize the ground for future crops, and it would seem as if God gave to His Son these early peaceful triumphs in order that He might at once begin "to see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." And although, as we shall soon see, this bright prospect was speedily to be clouded, yet enough of the harvest of the saints was gathered in these early ages to afford an earnest of "the great multitude that no man could number." How rich and abundant was this first harvest we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and we may say in fact that it continued to a greater or less extent until the death of the last of the Apostles. In these early days there seems to have been a depth of faith, of peace and joy, seldom realised in after ages on the earth. This is seen, amongst other things, in their having all things in common, and in their "gladness and singleness of heart." It is very gratifying to learn that the "multitude of the disciples increased in Jerusalem greatly, and a great number of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts vi. 7).

The "White Horse" does not appear again until near the close of the book, signifying, I think, that after these early ages the Church no longer *as a body* lived the life of Christ, nor exhibited the Divine Life on earth, though there were of course many in it who did so individually.

The opening of the first six seals seems to me to be intended to show us the *general* character of the Church during the time symbolized by the opening of each successive seal, and accordingly we find that the character of the professing Church when the

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second seal was opened, had already undergone a great change, and that for the worse. The horse is no longer white, nor is the rider on it seen with a bow as a conqueror—on the contrary the horse is *red*, the emblem of *war*. To the rider on the red horse is given a sharp sword, and the character of the Church of this second epoch is implied to be that of a body of men who were *at war*, for the remarkable words, "*that they should kill one another*," seem to me to signify not that the Church was being persecuted by external foes, but that they were *quarrelling among themselves*. No doubt the terrible quarrels and fights about so-called heresy are here alluded to. The Church was now no longer a conqueror in the proper sense of the word—its members were fighting to the death (anathematizing) one another. Peace was already taken from the earth (*i.e.*, the professing Church). The light of the Church was no longer white, enlightening, as it ought to have done, the whole earth; it had become *red* and threatening.

On the opening of the *third* seal things had become still worse. The Horse was now not even red, but *black*, *i.e.*, the Church now gave no light at all to the world. Gloom and desolation appear to have been rapidly covering the whole scene. What is typified by the pair of balances in the hand of the rider on the black horse is not very clear—it would almost seem to mean that now only just sufficient spiritual food was doled out to keep up the spiritual life at all—a spiritual famine had set in, and was becoming very severe. At the same time a voice is heard commanding not "to hurt the oil and the wine," *i.e.*, as I think, the Scriptures of truth were to be preserved *in the main* inviolate and untampered with, for those who were able to use them.

On the opening of the *fourth* seal still more terrible events occur. The Horse is not now even black—bad as that was—it is pale (χλωρὸς), or rather as I think it should be rendered, *ghastly* or corpse-like, for that seems what is intended by the word. This rider is now plainly declared to be Death, and Hades followed with him, showing that now the earth (the professing Church) had fallen under the sway of him that had the power of death, *i.e.*, the devil. The sight is one from which nature seems to recoil, and there is a terrible reality given to it by the words of the Seer which follow: "And power was given unto him over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword and with hunger and with death and with the beasts of the earth" (vi. 8).

Surely we have here the truth of the prophecy "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Now not only did the church give no light at all, but actually the light that was in her had become worse than darkness. She had clearly become a *persecuting* Church, she had invoked the aid of the powers of evil to help her against those she considered her foes, and misery, cruelty, and slaughter were the result.

The opening of the *fifth* seal shows us that of those who were

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thus slain many were martyrs and servants of Jesus Christ in the highest sense. "They were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held." Their position, under the altar, would seem to imply that they had been, as it were, offered up to God, and were holy and sacred to Him whom they so faithfully served. They were now and for ever in the temple of God, and will go no more out. White robes, the emblems of purity and peace, were given to them, and they are told to *rest* yet a little longer till the number of their brethren should be completed. Their request that God would judge and avenge their blood was no doubt made chiefly in order that God might hasten on the coming of His kingdom; though at the same time it implies in fact, I think, that God would, at the proper time, exact a terrible retribution for what had been done to them—for as the law of Moses says, "The land cannot be cleansed from blood save by the blood of Him that shed it" (Num. xxxv. 33).

When the *sixth* seal is opened we see to what all this led—the crimes and sins of the Church had gone up before God and were now producing their inevitable fruit. "I beheld, and lo, a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair and the moon became as blood." This earthquake is, I believe, the same as the earthquake which followed on the seventh angel's trumpet being sounded—and it represents most probably universal anarchy, gloom and misery. It is, in fact, in the words of Our Lord, "Distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." All authority is shaken to its foundation. It is in fact precisely similar to what took place in the days of Noah, "the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." The stars of heaven, *i.e.*, those who ought to have been the lights of Christendom, became utterly earthly, and as I think the saints of God obscure and unrecognised are so comparatively few, that they can scarcely, so to speak, be seen. Whether, according to the view of many, the servants of God will be removed from the earth prior to this I know not; the analogy of the deliverance of Noah would seem to make it probable that they will. However this may be, it is evident that the earthquake goes on; shock after shock shaking down everything, and at length, when too late, men begin to see what it is all sent for. They at last recognise the fact that the great day of God's wrath is come, and in words quoted from Isaiah, they say to the mountains, "Fall on us and to the hills, Cover us." "This last passage would seem to prove that the period alluded to by Isaiah when "the mountains of the Lord's House should be exalted above the hills," was not to arrive until this great day of God's wrath, when everything should be shaken that could be shaken, and therefore that this period has not yet arrived. Whether the singular expression

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"The wrath of the Lamb," wrath in connection with a Lamb being so incongruous an image, be intended to convey a *hint* of future forgiveness and mercy, I know not, but the phrase is certainly peculiar.

Having now traced in outline by the aid of the prophecy, the general character of the periods which are represented by the opening of each successive seal, we may fairly ask, Does not history fully bear out their truth?

It should always be remembered that these prophecies allude chiefly, not to the powers of the world, who knew nothing of Christianity, but to *professing Christians*; and every student of ecclesiastical history knows how soon the fair promise of the triumph of Christianity was blighted, and how rapidly the truth degenerated. Even in Apostolic days, "the mystery of iniquity" was at work; and after their death, fearful was the progress which it made. Just as the Jewish Church, very soon after the opening of Solomon's temple, became idolatrous, such was the case also with the Christian Church. There is every reason to believe that the sub-apostolic age was a very corrupt and superstitious one, and that it had in it, as Isaac Taylor observes, all the germs of Papal tyranny and priestly intolerance and cruelty.

And so, with some few bright exceptions, the Church has continued up to this time. It has, on the whole, followed the fortunes and imitated the example of the parent Jewish Church, only that its Babylonish captivity has lasted very much longer; and then, as now, only a small proportion of the Jews, who might have left Babylon, actually did leave her. The great majority remained where they were then, and so have the great majority of the Christian Church remained in Babylon.

But whether this be so or not, the fate of the Church, as a Church, seems likely to be just what it was in the days of the first coming of the Son of Man and the destruction of Jerusalem—"The end thereof shall be with a flood." The external professing churches of Christ shall be swept away like Jerusalem of old; but this will not be the case so long as any real servants of Christ remain in it. Previous to its destruction (as an earthly external power), it would seem that all God's people will leave it.

The steps in the downward progress are not difficult to trace. The Church was first corrupted by Judaism (traces of which are to be seen even in apostolic days), and then by Paganism. The instrument which the great adversary made use of to effect these changes would seem to have been the supposed necessity of dogma to salvation; for, by means of this, it was exceedingly easy to set men at variance, inasmuch as no two agree, or ever did agree, as to what was the exact amount required. Lecky says: "It is in itself evident, and it is abundantly proved by history, that the virulence theologians will display towards those who differ from them, will depend chiefly on the degree in which the dogmatic side of their

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system is developed. In the first century there was, properly speaking, scarcely any theology; no system of elaborate dogmas authoritatively imposed upon the conscience. Neither the character of the union of two natures in Christ, nor the doctrine of the Atonement, had been determined with precision, and the whole stress of religious sentiment was directed towards the worship of a moral ideal and the cultivation of moral qualities. But in the fourth century men were mainly occupied with innumerable subtle and minute questions of theology to which they attributed a transcendent importance, and which in a great measure diverted their minds from moral considerations."

Mr. Henry Dunn truly remarks, in his able work on "Organised Christianity," that the persecuting spirit displayed by the Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries was the consequence of theological development. Too truly had the warning words of the Lord Jesus, "If any man add to these words God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this Book," been verified. St. Paul had emphatically and distinctly proclaimed that the only doctrine necessary to salvation was a belief that God had raised up Christ from the dead; but the Church neglecting or despising his words, had added so many doctrines to this simple and beautiful creed that the very words which they used to express their so-called doctrines became traps in which they were "broken, and snared, and taken." It would almost seem as if the Lord Jesus had, in the words alluded to above (Rev. xxii. 18), given us a hint as to what was to be the cause of the plagues being sent for "adding to God's words."

Yet, while it is true that the professing Church as *a body* was thus corrupt, we should never forget that it had within it a great amount of truth and goodness. With all its faults, it has had the merit of holding up to the world the great truth, as I think Mr. Mill expresses it, that there is something more noble in the world than mere force, and that men are really accountable to God for all their actions. The writer alluded to just now has also truly observed, that the history of self-sacrifice is the history of Christianity. Moreover, throughout all the duration of the Church, there has always been a considerable body of real saints and servants of God who were indeed lights to those around them, and whose holy lives, and often heroic deaths, have testified to the truth of the religion of the Redeemer.

It is the presence of this righteous element in the Church that keeps it alive; for it is impossible for God to destroy it as long as there are even "ten righteous within the city." It is marvellous how much falsehood is kept together by a small amount of truth contained therein; and if so, how great must be the power of real unadulterated truth. In spite of all the cruelties and abominations of the professing churches of Christ, they have yet often been "cities set on an hill," which are seen for immense distances.

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Yet a time will assuredly come when the truth that is in all churches will leave them, for all prophecy seems to assure us that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," until in the end they say (as in Jerusalem of old) to the rocks, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us.

The object of all our Lord's great work in Heaven—a work which I believe to be going on now as much as ever—is to put down all rule, and all authority and power. It seems as though every form of government, every kind of rule, every sort of civilisation, was to be allowed a chance; to be tried, and as certainly to be found wanting; in order that all creation, having experienced the futility of everything else, may be led to seek its true blessedness in acknowledging and submitting to the rule of the Redeemer.

"Even so, Come, Lord Jesus," is the cry, the almost agonising cry of all creation. The saints everywhere have long echoed this cry from age to age; but now the whole creation, including, of course, all who are not God's people, will take up the cry. Mankind, as a race, have indeed been groaning and travailing in pain together; but, thank God, a time will come when they shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. "The very struggles which all animated beings make against pain and death, show that pain and death are not a part of the proper laws of their nature, but rather a bondage imposed upon them from without. Thus, every groan and tear is an unconscious prophecy of liberation from the power of evil."* But this cannot take place until the Redeemer shall have taken to Himself His great power.

T. W.

EASTER.

BY MRS. JOSEPH FEARN,

Author of "Plain Rhymes on the Pentateuch."

"Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. xv. 54.

I KNOW the Lamb of God
Was nailed upon the tree;
I know He shed His blood
For sinners—aye, for me!
But ah! I cannot lift mine eyes
Upon that bleeding sacrifice!

To sit and watch Him there,
They know not what they do.
Can those who love Him share
In such appalling view?
The Sun withdrew, and would not see
The Incarnate Saviour's agony.

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* Conybeare and Howson's Life and Epistles of St. Paul. Vol. ii., page 192.

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"*'Tis finished*" is the gracious word,
And faith will show the way
Where I may yet behold my Lord
As morn o'er mountains grey.
Instead of anguish, death, and strife,
"*The Resurrection and the Life!*"

The Life, the Light, the Love,
No waterfloods could drown;
The opened heavens above,
The glory, and the crown.
Through these the Lamb, once slain, I see,
And rise with Him to victory.

Hastings, April, 1881.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument Against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. II.

MAN IN DEATH ACCORDING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. iii. 19.

HERE we are informed that the "thou"—the man Adam—was composed of dust: "Dust *thou* art." Instantly we expect the objection to be raised,—"Oh, that holds good of his corporeal frame, not of his soul." As in duty bound, let us receive the objection, and give it all proper consideration.

Well, without the smallest intention of proving offensive to any one, we are constrained to remark that the assertion, supposed to come from an objector, is very bold, and to all appearance a *direct contradiction* of the awful Voice that addressed the man. It sounds like that, at all events; and we state this with the unreserved freeness one should exercise in warning a neighbour against a great sin, which, from the force of early training, he is in danger of committing. How can that be? Because there is no distinction of that nature drawn between body and soul in the appalling sentence: and it may turn out that certain theological ideas, supplied by hoary creeds and catechisms, begin at this very point to conflict with the unerring testimony. The doom pronounced on the first transgressor is seemingly very plain and intelligible. Moreover, we should naturally think its language in the most solemn circumstances would be of that nature only; and why cannot we read it just as it runs? So read, the meaning is: THE MAN MADE OF DUST WAS TO DIE.

It may help an inquirer who trembles at God's word—and we should all be duly solemnised in His presence—to understand the passage, if we now turn for a moment to the record of man's creation, and in a

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simple and child-like consideration of it, things not yet dreamt of may burst upon the reader's mind. Here is the history of that most interesting event: Gen. ii. 7,—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." As this text must come up again for inspection, and at much greater length, in a subsequent part of this discussion, we shall, with the reader's indulgence, merely summarise its teaching at present. Of what was man made? The reply is, "Of the dust of the ground;" that is, material, terrestrial elements. How did the wondrously finished organism become alive? Not by having a soul breathed into it, or conjoined with it; but by having the "breath of life" breathed into it. Quickened by the respiration of this life-giving breath, what was the man then? The answer is, "He became"—grew to be—"a living soul"—a soul alive. Breathing made the man—the man who was a soul—ALIVE: withdraw the breath, permanently arrest the breathing process, and the man—the man who *is* a soul—dies; when, of necessity, all the functions peculiar to him as an organised, intelligent, and responsible soul-creature, pause, and he returns to his kindred earth.

If that is so, need we feel any degree of astonishment at the following positive statements in the Sacred Volume?—statements that may be viewed either in connection with the story of man's original formation, or as independent utterances, having an authority from which there is no appeal.

"Why died I not from the womb? . . . For now should I (Job himself) have lain still—I should have slept." "Wherefore then hast Thou brought me forth out of the womb! Oh! that I had given up the ghost"—that is, expired—"and no eye had seen me!" And how would it have been with him then? "I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave" (Job iii. 11, 13, 18, 19).

According to the popular preaching and the poetry of the day, which meets the eye with such painful frequency, all the saints at least pass into a world of light when they remove from earth; but how contrastive is the language of Job with such delusive dreams:

"Are not my days few? Cease, then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness" (x. 20-22). "Man giveth up the ghost"—man expires—"and where is he?" (xiv. 10).

Where is he? As if he "had never been," according to verse 19 above.

"In death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Ps. vi. 5).

Plain enough, surely; but this one is yet stronger,—

"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men" (Ps. xc. 3).

In the preceding verse the writer of this touching psalm celebrates the unoriginated and enduring Being of the Almighty: "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." But man is simply the creature of a day.

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He appears and vanishes in this terrestrial scene. "Thou turnest man"—mortal man—"to destruction," &c. This is true of man as man. In death, each is destroyed, nothing is preserved; as we learn elsewhere,—"In that very day his thoughts perish." When the last moment arrives, each man, good or bad, renders back to God the spirit—the spirit of life—he had received at the origin of his being; and on its departure, the mysteries, the phenomena of life, such as the capacity for thought, for action, and the like, come to an impressive close. He—the man as a being—is destroyed. Essentially a mortal, the ascription of permanence to his nature seems an outrage on the whole facts and testimony bearing on the matter.

Though a frail creature confessedly, the common theology teaches us to address him,—"To everlasting thou art man!" Death, we are to believe, will not undo one child of the species. He is mentally and morally as perfect in respect to native capacity after it as before the stroke; he is alive and awake, singing praises or belching out impieties, as the case may be; in fact, in all the higher or essential points,—in everything that constitutes the man proper, and equips him for being a subject of the Divine government,—death leaves him as perfect an existence as he was while the arterial pulsations continued in his limbs. We turn from such daring and delusive misconceptions to the plain deliverance, humbling and sad though it be,—"Thou turnest MAN to destruction," &c.

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help" (Ps. cxlvi. 3).

Why not trust them? The response is,—Because every member of the human race is feeble and evanescent, and will soon forget you, and everything else.

"His breath"—the breath or spirit of life (Gen. ii. 7)—"goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish"—he thinks no more. (Compare Ps. civ. 29.) (verse 4.) "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one (or the same kind of) breath;—the breath or spirit of life;—"so that a man"—in his mode of living and in death—"hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity." "All"—at death—"go to one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccles. iii. 19, 20). "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished. . . . Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave (*Sheol*, often rendered *hell*) whither thou goest" (Eccles. ix. 5, 6, 10).

In representing the condition of man in death, could anything be more explicit than the above?

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" (Isa. viii. 19).

That is, should not a people call on the living God for direction, in

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place of dead men, whose thoughts have perished; who in Sheol can neither hear nor help? To the best of our discernment, the verse once more in the progress of inspiration forbids consulting the dead,—a practice, by the way, not restricted to far back times,—and the implied reason against the immense folly and obvious impiety of the custom seems to be exactly what we have suggested. King Saul, it will be recollected, perished for this very transgression (1 Chron. x. 13, 14).

Thus wrote good King Hezekiah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

"The grave (Sheol) cannot praise thee; death (that is, the dead) cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day" (Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19). "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not" (Jer. xxxi. 15).

This oracle was verified, or realised, in Herod's slaughter of the innocents (Matt. ii. 18); and of the children then slain it is written, as in the first instance, "they were not." They had ceased to be, and mothers wept over their mangled forms. Those massacred in Ramah, instead of passing alive into a region of light and angelic society, were in "the land of the enemy" (ver. 16). Death held them prisoners in Sheol; and the only comfort supplied to those whose hearts were rent with agony over the inhuman treatment their loved ones had endured was this: "Saith the Lord—they shall come again from the land of the enemy" (ver. 16).

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan xii. 2).

Where are those many? They "*sleep* in the dust of the earth."

"For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen . . . and they shall be as though they had not been" (Oba. 15, 16).

We have kept till now the next Scriptural quotation; and though the order of sequence is somewhat infringed by this method, we plead the greatness of the testimony as a sufficient apology for the reservation.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Sheol); neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption" (Ps. xvi. 16).

This prophetic oracle must be examined by us very minutely, for it has remarkable force and weight, as well as enduring comfort for the Blessed Lord who speaks, and for millions interested in His fortunes. These points merit special notice:

1. "My soul" is equal to "ME." It was customary with the Hebrews to use this form of expression, of which there are innumerable examples in the Sacred Writings. Sometimes the pronoun "my" has "heart" conjoined with it to express the same idea, as "my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation" (Ps. xiii. 5)—that is, I shall rejoice, &c.

2. The speaker's soul—the speaker himself, God's Holy One—was to die, but not to see corruption, which could only be averted by the bestowing upon Him a speedy resurrection from the grave. And who we must devoutly ask, was this "Holy One," whose soul, or human self, was to die,—to be committed to the grave, to be exposed to the

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ravages of corruption,—and yet not to undergo decay? All that has been disclosed to us, so we need not remain long in suspense. On the day of Pentecost the Apostle Peter said, beneath the canopy of heaven, to the listening multitude in Jerusalem:

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His (David's) throne: he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His (Christ's) soul was not left in hell (Sheol), neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus (David's lineal descendant) hath God raised up (from the tomb), whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand (the power) of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 29-33).

But not content with announcing that Jesus had been exalted to God's right hand, he adds, as if to prevent the least possibility of the phraseology being applied to David, the King of Israel:

"For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand" (Acts ii. 34).

David, who had ceased to be numbered with the living more than a thousand years ago, "is not ascended"—has not gone to heaven! Millions have been taught to believe that when the pious monarch died he went straightway to glory; and lo! that is *positively denied* in the first discourse preached by one of the Lord's apostles very soon after His ascension. That is more than enough to stagger a mind educated in the now popular belief.

Where then, if not in heaven, was David? The answer has already been found: he is dead and buried; he has seen corruption; his thoughts have perished; he hears no more; he sings the praises of God no longer; the gloom of Hades (the Greek translation of the Hebrew term Sheol)—the grave, the realm of the dead—has gathered itself around his lowly resting place. On him, when the number of his years was completed, the primal sentence came crashing down: "Dust THOU ART, and unto dust shalt THOU return!"

"David has not ascended into the heavens!" His journey was downwards to Sheol, not upwards to the home of light. "He was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption."

Now as we have an earnest wish to open up this great subject, and to place the reader in a position, as it were, to reach the gem-rock of truth by his own mental efforts, we shall—at the risk of repetition, about which we are not peculiarly troubled—imagine him to hold a brief conversation with the writer, in this form:

Writer—David, when he was committed to the tomb, "saw corruption."

Reader—You mean his body, of course; and if that, then we are at one.

Writer—I fear not, my friend.

Reader—What! you would not call the mere, the vile body of the man,—"the mortal coil,"—David?

Writer—Reverentially and unhesitatingly I accept the Bible language: "he"—the antecedent of the pronoun is David, the man David—"saw corruption."

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Reader—Hear me explain: I associate personality, not with the body, but with the soul of a man. The soul is the man. When a man is buried, I say there lies his body, but his soul—the real man—has gone somewhere else.

Writer—I quite understand you, and appreciate your difficulty.

Reader—Remove it, then; or confess that it exceeds your power.

Writer—Bear with me when I attempt to turn it out of the way; and in doing so I shall follow exactly your own rule of interpretation.

Reader—That seems fair enough, and now I wait for your attempt.

Writer—If you contend it was not David the man, but only the body in which he—or his soul—lived, that saw corruption, please tell me what, in your opinion, departed to heaven?

Reader—His soul,—the man himself,—to be sure.

Writer—Why?

Reader—Because the soul is the man, the actual man.

Writer—Then, if the Apostle Peter had testified, as I am sure you are ready to affirm, "*David has ascended into the heavens*," what would the meaning be? Would you not understand him to intimate that David's soul—which, according to your account, is the man himself, the actual man—had winged its flight to glory?

Reader—Ah! I must think a moment before replying.

Writer—And whilst you are thinking, my friend, I shall rehearse what the apostle *did say*: "David has NOT ASCENDED into the heavens." Then, whither did David go? For myself, I can only answer by repeating the words of the same authority, and I bow to their natural and simple meaning. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." And when the Bible doctrine of "soul"—even as already partially explained—comes to be understood, that apostolic deliverance will turn out exceedingly intelligible.

It is time now to recall the fact that another apostle—Paul—sanctions what the flame-crowned Pentecostal preacher advanced, and in his discourse, at a subsequent date, in the Jewish synagogue at Antioch, in Pisidia, is, if possible, more explicit:

Acts xiii. 36—"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, FELL ON SLEEP, and was laid unto his fathers (not taken to glory), and saw corruption." 37—"But He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption" (Acts xiii. 36, 37).

Observe a peculiarity: it only is said, Jesus "saw no corruption." Not a word about "falling on sleep" in His case. Wherefore? Because that He did so is there by implication, inasmuch as to be in the place of corruption—the grave—is identical with being asleep. David was subjected to both; the sleep he fell on in dying, and resulting corruption. Jesus was not saved from entering on the last slumber, for He expired on Calvary; but He was preserved from its usually attending consequence. That sleep which He reached by making "His soul"—Himself, HIS ENTIRE HUMANITY—"an offering" on the cross "for sin"—that sleep was broken by Omnipotence ere decay had commenced, and it soon begins, in virtue of the law under which the dust - the organic frame, which is a soul—returns, in all ordinary circumstances, to its pristine elements.

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Of course, the Sadducees could not have discerned the meaning of the prediction under review with that facility—or even an approach to it—which we experience in our inquiry, in consequence of those apostolic explanations of the oracle; nevertheless they could understand this much most readily, that to whomsoever the reference was, his soul—or the Holy One—was to pass within the abode of the dead, go down to the grave; and that while a prisoner there he would be exactly so situated as all other men are when the thread of life is broken. For him, henceforth, no remembrance, no praises, no thought.

Without introducing the apostolic commentaries, our labour, however, would have been quite imperfect; and rather than leave it incomplete, and without the great luminous flood which the sermons at Jerusalem and Antioch cast on the ancient prophecy, we have deviated from the straight line of logic; but have thereby, we presume to think, made a rich gain in the evolution of our subject, without putting our Lord's antagonists to any disadvantage, which in any circumstances would be inexcusable.

Here is one of the few places in the ancient Scriptures in which the dead are represented as manifesting the intelligent functions of life; acting, in other words, as if they were alive and in the full possession of their faculties. Yet few, we apprehend, will for a moment suppose that they were really alive, especially after examining the unambiguous testimony already presented on the problem we are trying to solve. The scene is Sheol, the indefinitely expanded region of the dead. Into it the "King of Babylon" enters; he who had excelled in the work of oppressing God's chosen people to his heart's content; he at length crosses its dismal threshold, and as he makes his appearance—all the insignia of royalty and power stripped from his person—the vast congregation is moved at his coming, and the captains and satraps and sovereigns of the nations rise up from their places in the gloom-world to mock his fallen grandeur.

Let us quote the prominent verses, for never was a more magnificent picture drawn, and yet it is merely poetry; imagination ministering to a high moral purpose, viz., delivering a warning to all tyrants who tread down the feeble, and to those of them in particular who are the defiant enemies of God, and the ruthless persecutors of His chosen ones, either after the flesh or after the spirit:

"Hell (Sheol) from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave (Sheol), and the noise of thy viols; *the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.* How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell (Sheol), to the sides of the pit." To Sheol! where the worms cover poor man. The meaning is, *thou*

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shalt be utterly destroyed. "They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory; every one in his own house." "House" here is equivalent to tomb, or separate grave. All the dead are in Sheol, but each of them in his own house, or pit, or burial place. "But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch; and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet." "Grave" in this verse is not Sheol in the original, and has the same meaning as house, or pit, or burial place. All graves are in Sheol, the domain, so to speak, of those who have vanished from earth, and each is in his own pit within its dark confines. "Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people" (Isa. xiv. 9-20). The very grave was not to be permitted to retain the conquered conqueror! He was to be cast out of it; there to lie exposed to insults from the passers-by; nay, to be trampled upon as the vilest and most loathsome thing on earth's surface.

A similar, though very short passage, is contained in a later prophet, which, for its affinity to the one just considered, we shall introduce in this connection, and merely transcribe, being confident that no reader can experience the least difficulty in grasping its meaning:

"The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell (Sheol) with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, *slain by the sword*" (Ezek. xxxii. 21).

Before closing this assemblage of Scripture authorities on the point in hand, we would merely request attention to a form of speech applied to the departed, common more particularly in the earlier pages of Holy Writ.

The first example is in Gen. xxv. 8, where we read that "Abraham gave up the ghost (that is, expired), and died in a good old age . . . and *was gathered to his people.*" The like is written about Ishmael in verse 17 of the same chapter; it occurs also in the death records of Isaac, Jacob, Aaron, Moses, and other notable characters, as the Hebrew story proceeds from stage to stage. It is sufficient to dwell for a moment on its significance as employed concerning the Father of the Faithful himself. Well, he gives up the ghost—the spirit—the life-breath; in a word, he dies, and is gathered to his people. "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace" (Gen. xv. 15). His being gathered to his people cannot mean his burial in a hereditary family fault, for he was entombed in a cave wherein no one but Sarah, his wife, reposed. Where were his ancestors? All in the dust; all in Sheol, the spacious realm of the dead, wherever their place of individual sepulture might happen to be. Like David long afterwards, Abraham "*slept* with his fathers;" and in the time of the apostolic Peter, David had "not ascended into the heavens," but his sepulchre was with them in Jerusalem unto that day.

The thought may not have suggested itself to the reader that it becomes a rather startling intimation if we give what may be called an

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orthodox turn to the words "gathered to his people." If we suppose his gathering to his people in dying or after death means his soul's passage into *their* company behind the rampart of blackness that divides the visible from the unknown, where do we locate the pious patriarch? With his people, of course. And what while in this world were they? Idolaters till the end of their lives, enveloped in the folds of heathen ignorance and impiety. Where does orthodoxy collect all such unholy members of our race? Did Abraham join their fellowship when he departed from this scene? If they were in heaven, are we to believe that the vast millions of idol-worshippers have been received into paradise? If they are at the other extreme of future being, what is Abraham doing in that fiery and tempestuous region? What! Abraham the faithful! Abraham the friend of God, among the lost! No, verily; he was to join the society of his ancesters "in peace," and in Sheol, where they were and where he was to repose along with them; "the weary are at rest."

Looking then at the Old Testament representation of man's condition when under the oppression of Death, we are obliged to concede that the questioners were not without a defence; and indeed, with records so clear, positive, and abundant, we are unable to discover what other view they could, on Scriptural grounds, have entertained.

All this array of evidence and argument was indispensable to the distinct understanding of the matter before us. For this cause: till we apprehended beyond a doubt what they believed concerning man in death, and had placed their view side by side with the Bible in their hands—with which on this point, as we judge, they entirely correspond —we could not, in a satisfactory mode, determine the meaning of their interrogation, and be prepared for an intelligent and accurate comprehension of the reply that immediately followed. In fact, without fixing what they meant by death, we could not determine in what sense they employed the phrase, "in the resurrection," which stands in their inquiry, "in the *resurrection* whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife." It matters nothing whether they regarded a resurrection as possible or impossible, *that* is what they understood by resurrection, should such an event, in the history of our world, at any time transpire through immediate Divine action. A castle built of diamonds may be pronounced an impossible structure in our world, for a most obvious reason, yet there is no barrier to our understanding of the terms themselves. We just take them at once in their simple and literal acceptation; castle meaning a strong building, and diamonds, precious stones; and the words always designate the same thing the world over. And so with "resurrection," when spoken by men who contemplated death as the Sadducees did. It is no less easily definable, and assuredly can have no import but the one we have assigned it, since its interpretation must be regulated and bounded by their understanding of death.

Thus in their question, with resurrection as its *central* idea, there was no complexity, no juggle of words, no haziness, no uncertainty, or indefiniteness. It was, as we may contend, a fixed quantity, beyond dispute, so far as related to the meaning of its terms. When fully expressed, their demand was this: If, as you teach, there is to be a resurrection of dead men, or a return of human beings from the grave to

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a new period of conscious existence, tell us whose wife then this woman is to be among the seven?

Having thus determined the sense, and the *only* sense, in which the questioners could use the term "resurrection," we deem it not altogether unnecessary to observe, that we expect their inquiry to be answered in its own sense, or as they understood their own words, interpreting their language by the avowed tenets of their sect. To respond to their question, using "resurrection" say in a new or modified sense, or not exactly in *their* sense, would dissatisfy an upright and a candid mind. Such a method of procedure would be more like shunning a difficulty than meeting it squarely. But when we consider Who is to answer them —"the Faithful and True Witness"—we may repose in the absolute certainty that, notwithstanding their mocking temper, the reply will commend itself to every sincere person, and awaken gratitude and praise in every devout, truth-loving heart.

Let us therefore with subdued feelings listen to Him who has "the keys of Hades and of death in His hands," when He opens up the secrets of the grave, and the counsels of Eternal Wisdom, and the purposes of Eternal Love.

(*To be continued.*)

A VIOLET.

GOD does not send us strange flowers every year.
When the Spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces;—
The *violet* is here.

It all comes back—the odours, grace, and hues;
Each sweet relation of its life repeated;
No blank is left, no looking-for is cheated;—
It is the thing we *knew*.

So after the Death-winter it must be;
God will not put strange signs in the heavenly places;
The old love shall look out from the old faces;
Veilchen,* I shall have *thee!*

THE MASTER.

Ὁ ΜΟΝΟΣ ΔΕΣΠΟΤΗΣ.

"BUT how in conjunction with inevitable democracy is indispensable sovereignty to exist: certainly it is the hugest question ever before propounded to mankind?" The solution, he says, will yield work for long years and centuries, but the secret of it is "to make the despotism just."

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* "Little Violet." Name in German for the "viola odorata."

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The above is from an obituary article on Mr. Carlyle, in the *Standard*, of the 7th February.

If this cry of humanity for help had not, long ago, gone up to the ears "of the Lord of Sabaoth;" if Jesus of Nazareth had not been born in Bethlehem; if He had not gone down to death on behalf of men; if the Christ of God had not been raised again by the mighty power of God, and seated at His right hand till the set time shall come, how terrible, how awful would be the future of this world. But the Lord has heard the cry, and His "Mighty One" is coming.

"The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God: And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springeth out of the earth by clear shining after rain" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2-4).

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalm ii. 6.)

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory" (Psalm xxiv. 7-10).

"And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15).

"He cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity" (Psalm xcviii. 9).

"The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice" (Psalm xcviii. 4).

G. J. v. S.

WHEN WILL THE PRESENT AGE CLOSE AND A NEW AGE OPEN?*

(A SEQUEL TO "THE 144,000 SEALED ONES," IN FEBRUARY.)

A MAN can receive nothing except it be given him of God, but with the promise expressly given for "the time of the end," that "the

* The paragraph on *Asher*, in Mr. Starkey's paper in February being inadvertently dropped, is here supplied:—In like manner, seeing that Asher is *one who walks on happily and prosperously*, we should expect to see such find favour with the sealing angel, for already they have found favour with God, and in the light and life thereof are thus pursuing their course happily and prosperously. Prosperity and happiness are seldom divorced, *never* if their nature is *spiritual*, but like twin graces compass and fill their possessors with joy through evil and good report, teaching them while sorrowful to be always rejoicing in God as their unchanging, because unchangeable, Father. And like Him who, for the joy set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame having His Father's promise (and how long He has waited its fulfilment! What a lesson of patience it contains for us!), "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied;" like Him they wait the joy and crown of rejoicing to be given them in that day. Therefore are they reckoned among the overcomers, and become as servants of our God sealed in their foreheads.

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wise shall understand," it may be that the Lord will give to those who seek it, that knowledge whereby they shall so read as to understand and determine approximately, if not precisely, when that time of the end shall be; not in the course of *years*, but in the course of *events*.

To the question, When will the present age close, and a new age open? we might answer in brief, When the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in; or, When the branch wild by nature, grafted a while, shall in righteous judgment be cut off, that the natural branch may be grafted again into its own olive tree. To inquire and to consider *what is revealed* concerning this is the subject of the present paper, and in dependence upon the showing of Another, we invite our readers to look that we may see together, so much as He may be pleased to show us.

First, then let us read thoughtfully the following Scriptures, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him (margin, shall put him to flight). And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord" (Isa. lix. 19, 20). "Thy people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isa. lx. 21). "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God, on them which fell severity, but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in His goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also if they abide not still in unbelief shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again; blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. xi. 22-26). "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16).

Now with such fulness of testimony—and these are but a few of the numberless quotations which might be made—concerning Israel's restoration as a nation to Divine favour, it is exceedingly puzzling to think how any serious and devout reader of the Scriptures could ever call in question its truth. But as the time for its fulfilment draws near, we expect to find the faith of the Church stirred to consider as the next event to His coming as her Bridegroom, *His coming to Zion as Israel's Redeemer*. For when He shall have taken to Himself His Bride, and the heavenly Jerusalem shall have become her home, Jehovah will say concerning Israel: "Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah, for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee, and as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isa. lxii. 4, 5). Thus shall there be the heavenly Bride in the heavenly Jerusalem, and the earthly bride in the earthly Jerusalem, and in the person of the God-man shall be fulfilled the Old Testament promise, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion" (Psa. ii. 6); and the New Testament promise, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33). For lack of discrimination between the earthly and the heavenly bride, the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem, much difficulty continues to exist in many minds.

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But the certainty and nearness of Israel's restoration, and the *bearing that event* has upon the change of age, is the subject now present to our minds; and so, without pleading by argument that which we take to be clearly revealed, we are about to inquire *what is revealed* concerning the time, when the fulness of the Gentiles having come in, the blindness in part, the veil, shall be done away; when, in short, God will begin again to deal in grace with Israel as a nation? And when He shall begin again with the nation for blessing, it will be with "*both* the houses of Israel," as they are called in Isa. viii. 14; for then the stick of Ephraim and the stick of Judah shall have become one in the hand of Jehovah. That God has been dealing in grace with a *remnant* of the house of Israel all along the present age, there need be no question, for He has never left Himself without witness; and some of the boldest and best preachers and exponents of the Gospel have been of the seed of Israel after the flesh, converted to the faith of the despised Nazarene, according to the promise, "Yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and shall be eaten, as a teil tree, and as an oak whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof" (Isa. vi. 13). But it must be apparent to every candid mind that the gain of the Gentile was at the cost of the Jew, in some of the branches being broken off, *that* the branch wild by nature might be grafted in, and so become partaker of the root and fatness of the good olive tree (see Rom. xi. 17-22).

To the question asked, then, we think the Scriptures quoted above supply the answer. *When* the enemy shall come in like a flood, and the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him, *when* the Redeemer shall come out of Zion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, *then* shall the natural branch be grafted into its own olive tree, for, *then* shall the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and all Israel shall be saved. If now we can determine the *when* and *then* of these events, we shall have our question—When shall the present age close and a future age open?—fully answered.

Now this, we think, should not be in the least difficult; for, to our own satisfaction—and we submit it to the candid consideration of our readers—"the enemy coming in like a flood," associated as it is with "the coming of the Redeemer to Zion," finds its fulfilment in Zech. xiv. 2, where "the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city," for, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations (gathered in Armageddon), as when He fought in the day of battle," and thus, "the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up His standard against them." So that while "it shall come to pass that in all the land two parts therein shall be cut off and die, the third part shall be left therein; and I, saith the Lord, will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried; they shall call on My name and I will hear them; I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God" (Zech. xiii. 8, 9). And we shall see presently how this is to be brought about.

But this day of the Lord, whereof He hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets, is that "one day known to the Lord" which shall close the present age in the judgment of the living nations gathered in

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hostility against Jerusalem. In the distant prospect of it prophets and men that had understanding in the visions of God, quailed for very fear and wonder at the ideas suggested by the spirit of prophecy within them. Let such of our readers as are interested in our subject, now follow our train of thought as expressed in the following passages, to save our quoting them at length: Isa. xiii. 6, 13; xxi. 2, 4; xxiv. 1, 6, 19, 23; Jer. xxx. 5-7; Daniel vii. 15, 28; Joel i. 15; ii. 1-11; Hab. iii. 16; Zech. xiv. 12, 13; confirmed by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 21, 22; Luke xxi. 25-27; then by the apostle 2 Thess. i. 7-9; ii. 8-12; and ultimately shown in vision to John, Rev. vi. 12-17; xix. 17-21.

Thus shall the history of Daniel's image, descriptive of the times of the Gentiles, be seen to have run its course, and the time come for the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, to strike the image on its feet, that it may become as the dust of the summer threshing floor in the presence of the kingdom then to fill the whole earth.

Now consider whereto this brings us in the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ! The sealing of the 144,000 "of the tribes of the children of Israel" (the true "Israel of God" Gal. vi. 16. "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel" Rom. ix. 6), and their preservation in the day of trouble is long since past. Their rapture, simultaneous with the first resurrection, *comprising together* the Church, is long since past. The slaying of the witnesses and the fall of Babylon is also past. The opening of the seals, the sounding of the trumpets, and the utterance of the woes, is also past. The marriage of the Lamb is also past. Heaven has opened and revealed One seated on a white horse, whose name is Faithful and True, and the armies of heaven have followed Him upon white horses for this, the *closing conflict* of the present age. For now the beast and the false prophet are taken and cast alive into the lake of fire. And the next vision shown to John is the binding of Satan, and his being shut up in the bottomless pit, which, to our understanding, becomes the *closing act* of the present age.

According to our views as Futurists, the whole scope of this Book of Revelation, from chap. iv. to xix. inclusive, belongs to *this present age*, and, therefore, no mention whatever is made in it of the house of Israel after the flesh, for the self-evident reason that God's dealing with His ancient people, as a nation, in grace, belongs *not* to this present age. The prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah had already furnished us with ample testimony to His purpose concerning them, and what New Testament confirmation was needful, was added in Romans xi.

Just a word here before parting with the Book of Revelation and the age of which it tells. Those who read the visions granted to John, as if they were shown to him in *chronological* order, will fail of their teaching, and find themselves in hopeless confusion. The loosing of the six seals are recorded in *one* chapter, but they cover the *whole* day of wrath; and, according to our reading, the scene recorded in chap. xii. must be enacted before the vision recorded in chap. iv. can be realised. Thus the visions will be simultaneous, or overlapping one another in their fulfilment. Here is wanted wisdom, and let him that hath understanding make a right account.

But now a new age opens, and that we may note the predictions con-

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cerning it, we return to the Old Testament and listen to the prophet Zechariah. "And in that day His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east," &c. (Zech. xiv. 4). So that now we see Him again in person come as literally as when on the same Mount "He lifted up His hands, and blessed them, and was parted from them," but now "as the Redeemer come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob," that He may renew this His covenant with them, "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34). *Then* upon "the third part brought through the fire" will He pour "the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. And the land shall mourn, every family apart, the family of the house of David apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart and their wives apart—these twain representing Judah—the family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of Simeon apart and their wives apart,"—these twain representing Ephraim—for thus *both* the houses of Israel, symbolised by *two* sticks in the hand of the prophet, shall become *one* in the hand of Jehovah. "For in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David for sin, and for separation from uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered, and I will cause the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 2).

Now shall the heart of Israel in turning again to the Lord have its veil taken away. *Now* shall the blindness (margin, hardness) in part that has happened to Israel become removed, and "His people shall be willing in the day of His power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: Israel shall have the dew of his youth; for now shall the Lord send the rod of His strength out of Zion" (Ps. cx.).

Now shall the natural branch be grafted into its own olive tree and become fruitful as never before, for now shall the prophecy by Joel become fulfilled, "It shall come to pass afterward (i.e., in the last days) that I will pour out My spirit upon *all flesh*, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My spirit. Be glad *then* ye children of Zion and rejoice in the Lord your God, for He hath given you a teacher of righteousness according to righteousness (see margin) and He shall cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain. And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you, and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in

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the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and none else, and My people shall never be ashamed" (Joel ii. 23-29).

But this new age wherein there shall be one Lord, and His name One, and Himself manifested King of kings and Lord of lords, will not be *at once* a reign of peace, so that *immediately* "swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks;" for our conviction is that the 2nd Psalm will have a fulfilment such as it had *not* when quoted by the church in its infancy. (See Acts iv. 25, 26.) He did not *then* "speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." But if now the Gentile nations should not readily submit to the new order of things wherein they will find the tables turned upon them by those they formerly oppressed and despised, some agency must be employed to accomplish it. For the purpose of Jehovah so long ago declared by His servant Moses must now be fulfilled. "The Lord hath avouched thee to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour, that thou mayst be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken" (Deut. xxvi. 18, 19). "And the Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail, and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath" (Deut. xxviii. 13).

If *then* "the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," we shall find a meaning in the words, and a time for their fulfilment we have *not yet seen.* "Thou art my battle axe, and weapons of war, for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms, and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider" (Jer. li. 20, 21). "And the Lord shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath," &c. (Ps. cx. 5, 6). And then Psalms xlvi., xlvii., and xlviii. shall have a meaning and intent they have never yet been known to have. Nor let us fail to observe that these immediately follow Psalm xlv. where, as the Bridegroom of his newly acquired bride, He girds His sword upon His thigh to ride forth prosperously in the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness. Thus shall it be seen that "The Lord is a man of war" assuming the character of David in Psalm xlvi.; *before*, as the "King of Salem," He assumes the character of Solomon in Psalm lxxii.

But when at length—and we do not for a moment suppose that it will take long for the King of kings and Lord of lords to give His people the final victory over all their enemies, so that they shall be acknowledged the regal nation—He the Seed Royal of the house of David, and they the lineal descendants of their father Abraham, *then shall* the swords be beaten into plowshares and the spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. *Then* shall Isaiah lx., lxi., and lxii., with all their glowing eloquence of promise and prediction, become realised, The Gentiles shall come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising, the sons of strangers shall build up her walls, and kings shall minister to her. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve her shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. Strangers shall stand and feed her

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flocks and the sons of the alien shall be her plowmen and her vine-dressers. "But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God, ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves" (Isa. lxi. 5, 6). "In that day shall there be upon the bridles of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts, and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts" (Zech. xiv. 20, 21).

Now, however opposed this may be to the preconception of any of our readers, *or* the popular conception of the many, we shall not deem it sufficient that they assail our position only, but that they show us theirs side by side with ours, and *so* give the readers of the RAINBOW the opportunity of comparing both with the Scriptures, which are the true test of us all. The *thoughtless* can, much to their own satisfaction, pull down and destroy another man's theory; but the *thoughtful* alone can construct a theory to the satisfaction of others.

Hackney, London, E. NATHANIEL STARKEY.

SPRING THOUGHTS.

AT the approach of the sweet season of spring, heralded by the singing of birds and the appearing of flowers on the earth, while the trees stand ready to be clothed with leafy beauty, after a winter, to some of us so terribly severe, our hearts are gladdened. We feel that the common bounties of God's providence demand our gratitude. By common bounties, I mean those He sheds on the evil and on the good; on the evil, alas! too often in vain, seeing they say to the Giver: "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." Let it not be so with the writer and the reader. In winter, as in spring, in prosperity as in adversity, in straits as in abundance, let us recognise His hand, and thankfully acknowledge "He doeth all things well." How abundant and abundantly clear are the *evidences*, and the *testimonies* too, that "to all the Lord is good; that "His tender mercies are over all His works." Are we not assured that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice? that He provides food for the young ravens that cry? that He filleth all things living with plenteousness? that the very hairs of our heads are all numbered? Can it be supposed that He regards with indifference the late lamentable sacrifice of twenty thousand human lives in England's mad war for a "scientific frontier," and of thrice twenty thousand camels and horses that perished? Nay, verily. He "in whose hands is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind, takes cognisance, and marks with pitying eye both man and beast. And, surely, were it not for His restraining mercy, our earth, so frail through sin, else so fair and lovely, would become an unmitigated hell; for, indeed, all too truly has the poet of the "Night Thoughts" said:

"Man is to man the sorest, surest ill."

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But we fall back on this, "He doeth all things well." True it is that, in His perfect wisdom, which is in harmony with His perfect goodness, He suffers us to receive the due reward of our errors and transgressions. Take a simple illustration. Wilfully or unguardedly, I eat and drink to excess day after day. By and by the inevitable law is brought to bear on me. Sooner or later I suffer bodily discomfort, bodily disorder; and 'tis well if I take warning in time, lest my disorder become chronic. But can I justly impute blame to the Almighty? Am I not in mercy reminded that every transgression and disobedience must and will receive a due recompense of reward? else, would not everything go hopelessly wrong with me? Should I not be in danger of going from bad to worse with a fatally smooth descent? Rather be it mine to heed the warning, conscious that Divine wisdom cannot err, and mindful of the apostolic exhortation, "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

To this all-important end may I be an apt, attentive, and obedient learner in His school, who still teaches as never man taught. Then and thus will the promise be fulfilled in my experience, "Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely." I shall be graciously brought into His banqueting house, and His banner over me will be love. He will compass me about with songs of deliverance, and enable me to say with exulting and adoring joy, "The winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come."

May it be so in His boundless and unfailing mercy who doeth all things well.

THOMSON SHARP.

Eatington, Stratford-on-Avon.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF DEATH.

THE nature of death, its immediate consequences, and its total abolition in the case of the just, are subjects upon which the Christian Church has gone hopelessly astray; owing, doubtless, to the adoption of the Platonic theory respecting the attributes of the human soul.

It is desirable, therefore, before considering these subjects to compare the Platonic theory with the Biblical revelation, and determine which of the two has the greater claim upon our confidence. Plato taught that man is a compound being, consisting of two parts—body and soul; the body gross, carnal, and perishable; the soul indivisible, immaterial, and immortal. He considered this immaterial soul to be essentially the man; complete in itself; independent of the body; retaining at death all the functions of the bodily organisation and capable of indefinite progress when liberated from its outward and inferior covering. This theory has unhappily been adopted by the Christian Church, and engrafted upon the Scripture scheme of redemption, to the no small injury of the entire range of Divine truth.

The Biblical explanation of this matter is, on the contrary, as follows: Man's nature is *tripartite*, consisting of body, soul, and spirit; the body and soul perishable; the spirit, irrespective of moral conditions, returning at death to God who gave it. "Then shall the dust return to the

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earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7).

The terms soul and spirit are never used synonymously or interchangeably in the sacred Scriptures; and for this reason the two words express totally different ideas. The Biblical soul is a soul that can *die*. "The soul (psuche, Sept.) that sinneth it shall *die*" (Ez. xviii. 4). "When thou shalt make his soul (psuche) an *offering* for sin" (Isa. liii. 10). "The Good Shepherd giveth His *life* (*psuche*, soul) for the sheep" (John x. 11). "Thou wilt not leave my *soul* (psuche) in hell" (hades, the grave) (Acts ii. 27). These examples are sufficient to show that the Biblical soul has nothing in common with the Platonic or indestructible soul, or what in the present day is understood by this term. It is a sad fact that the public teaching of the day, the hymnology and the whole scope of religious literature perpetuate, an erroneous meaning of the word soul to the utter confusion of its Scriptural use.

In still further contrast with the Platonic theory the Scriptures declare that the essential characteristics of man are to be found in his corporeal organism, and not in his immaterial or spiritual nature. The possession of spirit is not a peculiar characteristic of man; angels possess spirit, and for that matter so do the inferior creation, the brute beasts, &c. The graceful form, the erect bearing, the physical organisation—these constitute the man; which fact is demonstrated by direct Scripture statement and by the incarnation of Christ. "And the Lord God *formed man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and *man* became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). Redemption required that the Redeemer should become a *man*, and should take hold upon the seed of Abraham, and "inasmuch as the children were partakers of *flesh and blood* He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. ii. 14). Consequently "Christ was made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 4, 5). Had the Saviour taken the nature of angels he would have possessed spirit, but he would not have been a man. The incarnation of Christ supplies an irrefragable proof that the organised body is the essential constituent of the man.

Again. The spirit whilst in union with the body is the source of vitality and intelligence. "The body without the spirit is dead" (James ii. 26). "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11). Nevertheless, there is nothing either in Scripture or in human experience to show that the spirit "unclothed" or "naked" (2 Cor. v. 3) is capable in a bodiless state of exercising any functions corresponding to those possessed by the living organised body. The bodily organism is the alone means by which the spirit can communicate with or receive impressions from the outer world, or indeed of producing any subjective ideas whatever. The cerebral functions are essential to thinking. Loss of any of the bodily functions, such as seeing, hearing, or thinking, cannot be supplemented or made good by any intrinsic power possessed by the spirit. Their loss is irremediable, and in case of death must be total and absolute. The beautiful artistic conceptions of the painter cannot be transferred to paper without the agency of *matter*—pencil, fingers, hands and arms, &c., and not only so, but the very conceptions themselves can have no exis-

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tence without the aid of *matter*. It is the universal experience of men that the matter of the brain is essential to thinking; severe injury of the brain suspends all mental operations, much more must its entire destruction result in total unconsciousness. Hence the necessity, on philosophical grounds as well as upon the ground of Scripture truth, for a new bodily organism, or, in other words, the resurrection of the dead.

With these general remarks we are now in a position the better to understand the nature and effects of death, and we shall find, as we naturally might expect, that the statements in the sacred Scriptures concerning death, and the Biblical revelation of man's tripartite nature, agree perfectly together.

What then is death? What are its effects upon the nature of man? and what the condition to which man is reduced by its power? The answer given to these questions by the Platonist is that death is a transition or translation to another state of being; that man does not *die*, but, like Enoch or Elijah, is translated to another region, either of happiness or woe. Unfortunately for this illustration, the two Patriarchs mentioned did *not die*, so that there is not the slighest analogy between two men who did not die and the generality of mankind who do die. But what saith the Scripture?

1. The Scriptures, as we have already seen, affirm that the man is the living bodily organism, and that this organism is made of dust. "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust" (Psa. ciii. 14). The effect of death upon this framework of dust is, as we are well aware, its destruction. This was the penalty incurred by our first parents. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19). No mention is made here of any sufferings in a spirit world; these are simply the additions and inventions of men. The same penalty was inflicted upon the antediluvians. "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth" (Gen. vi. 7); and this is the general character of death experienced by all men. "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men" (Psalm xc. 3). *Man*, the child of dust, whose breath is in his nostrils, is not translated to some other sphere of being by death, but is destroyed thereby.

2. The Scriptures answer further that the spirit of man, the source of life and intelligence whilst in union with the body, does at death return to God who gave it (Eccles. xii. 7). As to its actual condition in the denuded state, not the slightest information is vouchsafed to us in the only source of information we possess, that is the Bible, and we are left to infer from what we know of human psychology by actual experience, that apart from its organism the spirit has no power of exercising or supplementing organic functions; but that these functions cease and determine at death. The spirit is not an entity, a being complete in itself, but simply a part of a wondrous whole, and hence the "*rationale*" of the Scripture doctrine of a resurrection of the dead. Were the spirit capable of exercising these functional powers in its separate condition, there would be no occasion for a new bodily organism, and so evidently is this the case, that Platonists very seldom make any reference to the doctrine of the resurrection.

The general tenour of Scripture will confirm the foregoing remarks; will demonstrate that death is the *destruction* of man, and not a *transition*

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to another sphere of being. "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee" (Psa. vi. 5). "For the *living know* that they shall die, but the *dead know not* anything." "For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest" (Eccl. ix. 5, 10). "The night cometh when no man can work" (John ix. 4). "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. cxv. 17). "And many of them that *sleep* in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan. xii. 2).

These passages are utterly incompatible with the modern theory of death; to know nothing, and yet to know as we are known; to be unable to praise God, and yet to be chanting hosannas with the heavenly hosts; to do no manner of work or device, and yet to be ministering spirits to the living; to be asleep and dead, and yet at the same moment of time to be awake and alive to all the felicities of Paradise, are ideas absolutely contradictory and impossible. Yet they serve to show the extreme departure of the Church from sound Scriptural doctrine; neither the heaven nor the hell of the modern pulpit has any place in God's revelation.

3. Again. The nature of death has been defined by our blessed Lord to be the "*losing of the soul;*" and, surely, a man is never more lost than when he is dead. "For whosoever will save his life (psuche, soul) shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life (psuche, soul) for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul" (psuche) (Matt. xvi. 25, 26). According to to this passage, a man may lose his soul either for a time or utterly and absolutely; death, either in the case of the righteous or in the case of the wicked, is the "*losing of the soul:*" in the case of the righteous the soul is restored at the resurrection, never to be lost any more; in the case of the wicked, the soul is restored simply for the purposes of judgment; and then, when condemned, body and soul are cast into hell (gehenna) for absolute destruction; this is the second death. Our Lord, in Luke xii. 4, 5, and in Matt. x. 28, puts this case very clearly. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body and *after that have no more that they can do*;" man's power cannot extend beyond the killing of the body and the destruction of the life (psuche) *temporarily;* but the dead are not beyond the reach of Divine power; there is a judgment to come, and the first death affords no escape from it; the guilty soul will be dragged from its *hades* prison-house, and in *gehenna* receive the due reward of its deeds, viz., absolute extinction.

The faithful disciple, however, who is willing to die for Christ's sake, or, in the words of our Lord, to "*lose his soul*" temporarily, shall find it again (i. e., at the resurrection), and shall then keep it to life eternal. See John xii. 25—"He that loveth his life (psuche) shall lose it; and he that hateth his life (psuche) in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Thus death to the Christian is the temporary loss of his soul; but, were death perpetual, were it an eternal sleep, how then? In that case, says the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xv. 18), we should altogether *perish:* "if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.* If in this *life only* we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Paul's hopes were fixed upon a future life, but if the dead be not raised, there would be, in

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Paul's opinion, *no future life;* and to sacrifice the present life for a future life when, upon the hypothesis of no resurrection, there would be no future life, would be a miserable outlook for the Christian. Well might he say in verse 32, "What advantageth it me if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, of the dead rise not?" In that case, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" (i.e., we perish). These passages confirm the aspect of the question here set forth: that death is a terrible reality; it is man's last enemy; it is the destruction of the man; the losing of his soul. It is not the beautiful and imaginary state painted by modern poets, but a state from which the Saviour came expressly to deliver us, and without such deliverance, would be our total extinction. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plaguer; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos. xiii. 14). "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and *deliver them* who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15). "Who hath abolished death (not *dying*; * it is appointed unto men once to die: death, as a state, shall be abolished), and hath brought life and immortality (immortal life) to light by the Gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10). Christ by His resurrection abolished the state of death, to which He had voluntarily submitted, and the Gospel informs us that all who believe in Him shall experience the same glorious deliverance from the tomb. "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life, and *I will raise him up at the last day*" (John vi. 40). "There is a *natural body* and there is a *spiritual body*, and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. xv. 44, 49). "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades), where is thy victory" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55).

The erroneous teaching of the present day has metamorphosed the state of death into a state of life, and has taken the Scriptural descriptions of a state of blessing subsequent to and beyond the period of resurrection and applied them to the present condition of the dead; and thus the whole revelation of God's scheme of redemption has been thrown into utter confuson. Hence, likewise, the doctrines of the second advent, the resurrection of the dead, and a day of judgment, have been set aside, and have well nigh become obsolete truths. "When Christ, our *life*, shall *appear*, THEN shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 4).

Woodbridge Lodge, Oxford. CHAS. UNDERHILL.

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* The term death in Scripture denotes a state, and covers the whole period between *dying* and the resurrection; and, whenever persons who have died are spoken of, whether righteous or wicked, they are called THE DEAD. "*The dead* in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. iv. 16). "The rest of *the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. xx. 5).

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SEALED ONES.

DEAR SIR,—I am obliged to General Goodwyn for his notice of my paper on this subject, especially if any of our readers have misunderstood me. It was not possible I could mean that God has had no dealings in grace with *individual* Jews during this age, when such names as Herschel, Schwartz, and Saphir adorn the roll of modern preachers, to say nothing of the illustrious past.

My scriptural authority for the statement on page 76, that the sealed ones in Rev. vii. are *not* the seed of Jacob after the flesh, is, that they are *called* "the tribes of the children of *Israel*," and *that* the "Israel of God" of the New Testament are the people of God, those who *are* Israel whether *of* Israel or not see (Rom. ix. 6, and Gal. vi. 16). From these passages the General may see that it is no "vague pointing" of mine, but the mind of the Spirit so expressed.

But how can the General, in the presence of Rom. ii. 29, say a Christian is *not* a Jew inwardly? He might as consistently say circumcision is *not* that of the heart in the spirit.

I know perfectly well that when the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, all Israel, the lineal descendants of Abraham, shall be saved—in some sense; but that is just the question between us, *when shall* the Deliverer come out of Zion? An intelligent and comprehensive grasp of the Futurist theory *necessitates* the conclusion to which I have come, viz., that the sealing foreshown in Rev. vii. belongs to the present age, and therefore *prior* to the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, which—as I read—belongs to *the age yet future*.

The entire scope of the Book of Revelation from chap. vi. 1, to chap. xx. 3, as a Futurist would read it, belongs to the future of the *present age*, and *therefore* no mention whatever is made in it of Israel after the flesh.

There is no question between me and the General about the teaching of Rom. ix. to xi. I am as satisfied as he can be that the seed of Jacob, must yet take root, blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit; neither is there any question between *us*, I believe, about the time of it.

But I will not anticipate future matter, for already I have prepared for the press another paper in which the General's objections have been more fully met, and it will appear as soon as the Editor can give it space; the purport of which will be to answer the question, "When will the present age close, and a future age open?"

Yet one word more in answer to the General's final question, why the Spirit of truth has omitted the tribe of Dan from the list of the tribes in Rev. vii. but inserted it with the other tribes in Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Ezekiel? My paper already before him provides the answer by showing that the tribes of the children of Jacob are *not* intended, *but* the tribes of the children of the "Israel of God." When the patriarch Jacob, and the prophets Moses and Ezekiel prophesied, it was of the *former;* when John was shown in vision, it was of the *latter*.

Yours faithfully,

NATHANIEL STARKEY.

Hackney, March, 1881.

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THE HEBREW WORTHIES.

DEAR SIR,—The Scriptures teach us to look for a terrible time of woe to the earth, and a time of terrible persecution directed against "the saints of the Most High." Both the woe and the persecution are yet in the future. But we are taught that the Lord Christ will come for His church before either the woe or the persecution commences, or, at all events, long before they are completed. For the end of the persecution shall result in blessing to the people of Israel, and that is very shortly before the millenial reign of our Lord. The second advent of the Lord will then be completed, for that advent is not a single event but includes several distinct manifestations. He will come first for His believing members who look for Him, who form His body, the Church. To that period the Apostle Paul refers when in 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, he writes of "the dead in Christ" rising first, then the alive and remaining members shall be caught up too. I receive that word in its literal truth. But does the term, "dead in Christ" include all the old worthies? "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Among those who shall rise in the first resurrection will be the martyrs slain *after* the coming of our Lord for His body, in the air, and necessarily if slain after our rapture, they must rise again after it. Still they have their part in the first resurrection, which therefore is manifestly not a single event carried out in one moment, but a continuous one terminating at a set time. "The dead in Christ," does not, I suggest, include any but the believing members of the Lord's body, the Church of the present dispensation. They attain first to the (exanastasis) resurrection from among the dead ones. Then, later on, when the set time comes the old worthies shall also be raised. Then Abraham and David, and the many thousands and thousands of justified Israelites, shall, like Daniel, "stand in their lot in the end of the days." Those days are clearly announced as a set time (Daniel xii. 6-13).

Mr. Underhill has, I think, by overlooking the different periods of the first resurrection, fallen into an error, and so on the point on which he has written, wrongly thinks that I have "incorrectly put" the words of Paul before your readers.

I hold to those words as absolutely literal and true, and have used them correctly. If this letter seems dogmatic, allow me to state that I do not wish to occupy much of your space in defending myself. I have therefore simply stated my belief without going fully into the grounds thereof. Many, I believe, will sympathize with me therein.

Yours faithfully,

G. J. *v.* S.

REJOINDER.

DEAR SIR,—I observed that Mr. Mill, in your March number, has again written upon the subject of Luke xvii. 21, in which he replied to my criticism in December. Will you permit me to make a rejoinder? In doing so, I am glad to notice the harmony of Mr. Mill's belief with my own on the *nature* of Christ's Kingdom; and on all kindred topics we are, no doubt, happily agreed. Mr. Mill, likewise, is not "set apart for the work of the ministry;" therefore, it will not be deemed personal when I say that I have in my long experience witnessed many a trained minister present to his hearers a motto text, and immediately retire from the

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subject. Mr. Mill says: "Not long ago I heard Luke xvii. 21 referred to as a proof of its spiritual nature, and this is far from being an exceptional case. How, then, is there 'no scope for the nature of the Kingdom of God' to be found in this passage?" If Mr. Mill justifies his opinion of this text on such a ground, it will not suffice for me; the conventionalities of the pulpit are as distasteful as are those of any other department of public teaching; yea, more so; for, after listening to a clever, rhetorical sermon, to be compelled to ask, "Where was the text?" is both disappointing, and of doubtful benefit. Now for the text! Luke xvii. 21. I reaffirm that "Christ is here giving an invaluable warning against the attempts of misleading teachers to *antedate* His *coming* by plausible reference to existing events." Mr. Mill and I are taking a different standpoint; he seems to occupy an angle which convinces him that it does teach Christ's kingdom is a spiritual one; I, on the contrary, look at the text in the forefront, and take it for what it says, under *the circumstances* in which it was said. Of course, the kingdom is both spiritual and material; but that is not what is taught here (in Luke xvii. 21). No great truth is promoted by misplaced advocacy. To prove that Mr. Mill is in error, I invite him to look again at the words *exactly where they occur*. "And He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come? And He answered and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, See here! or See there! for behold the kingdom of God is among you." This *concludes* His answer to the Pharisees. A single inquiry is made as to *when* the kingdom should come; a single answer is given: it cometh *not with observation*. If those unbelieving Jews expected Jesus would gratify their derisive curiosity, they must have been greatly disappointed. The passage, then, is complete in itself; an answer to His questioners, the Pharisees. There is nothing about the *nature* of Christ's kingdom; those men would not have understood the true answer to *that*; even the Disciples were in much confusion about the *character* of the kingdom. The Pharisees had their idea of Messiah's kingdom, and they were bent upon *committing* our Lord to a positive statement as to *when* the coming was to take place.

I notice that Mr. Mill does not relish my remark that he had founded his article upon an "isolated text;" but I will go further in that assertion, he even isolated a passage from an isolated text, and headed his paper with the words, "The kingdom of God is within you." This word *within* best suited his essay. Alford translated it *among*, and Mr. Mill, I admit, quotes it "among" in the body of his article.

Well, this is addressed to sceptical Pharisees, and as such, I can understand it in two ways only.

1st. Jesus says: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and adds, "they shall not say, See here! or See there! for the kingdom of God is among you;" i.e., no one shall be able to describe the coming beforehand. This accords with the inspired statement in Matt. xxiv. 27, "For even as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth as far as the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

2nd. If the next words, "Behold the kingdom of God is among you," be considered an announce-

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ment of Jesus to *them*, the Pharisees, it may be equivalent to saying, *I*, the King, the embodiment of the kingdom, am among you; and this would be more consonant with the circumstances of the expression than the rendering of Mr. Mill. Having made this rejoinder, I can only say that Mr. Mill has written a good sermon, but unfortunately has *headed* it with the *wrong* text. My original purpose in commenting upon the fact was prompted by this consideration: the mistake should be noticed, as the readers of the RAINBOW may be counted by thousands, and truth must be *legitimately* supported. F. MOORE.

Hornsey Rise.

Literature.

The Vision on the Holy Mount is a four page tract, in which that sublime scene is properly represented. It is suitable for distribution, and may be had of the author, Mr. M. W. STRANG, 4, Hampden Terrace, Mount Florida, Glasgow, at 4d. per dozen, or 2s. 6d. per 100.

Enaid; or, a Series of Brief Essays upon the Unscriptural Character of the Division of Man's Nature into Soul and Body. By RICHARD FOULKES GRIFFITHS, Baptist Minister and Barrister-at-Law. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS unpretending little book contains more common sense and Divine truth on the subject to which it is devoted than libraries of what is called orthodox theology. We are quite satisfied that thoughtful men must, sooner or later, accept the doctrine we have been teaching for many years; and Mr. Griffiths is a new witness whom we gladly hail. His language is clear, his argument cogent, his learning sufficient. We commend his book to reverent thinkers.

NOTICES.

"B. B."—*Alma Mater* is Latin, and signifies fostering mother; a college or seminary where one is educated.

MR. WM. NICHOLSON writes: "Pray permit me to call the attention of your esteemed contributors and readers to the need of making marginal notes on their Bibles with reference to texts from time to time corrected in the RAINBOW, if it is in contemplation to advance in Scriptural knowledge. From time to time, in spite of all that has made the RAINBOW what it is, one sees corrected texts therein quoted by subsequent writers as if such texts had never been subjected to emendation, and to the eye and mind of those who wish to progress, such quotation of exploded renderings is an offence not easily forgiven."

Our correspondent gives an illustrative instance from our last number in which a defectively rendered text from the Authorised version is quoted. Had it been necessary for the writer's argument to improve the reading, it would have been done; for we can assure Mr. Nicholson that the writer is a highly educated man.

T. J. HITCHCOCK.—We are obliged to leave over much good manuscript. Nevertheless yours would have appeared this month but for the fact that Mr. Starkey sends a "sequel." If, after reading that, you still think your paper needed, let us know and it will appear next month.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

MAY, 1881.

HERE AND HEREAFTER.*

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

THE first thing I have to do at present is to correct a prevalent misapprehension. This verse is popularly understood to mean: "*Here* (on earth) we see through a glass darkly, but *there* (in heaven) face to face." Now the apostle did not say that, and he did not mean that. Nothing of the kind is found in his writings. Pauline theology is invaluable to us, and we accept it as Divine.

There is no hint here about a change of locality; it is a question of time; it is a question of advancing, of growth, of intellectual and moral development; but it is not a question of change of place. Paul did not teach that the moment a man dies, with all his imperfections, in his unfinished condition, he becomes perfect and complete in some other world; you will not find anything of that kind in God's Book. Look at the illustrative analogy: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." It was the same Paul in the same world; it was a matter of years, of growing experience, of holy culture; but it was the same man. And he adds, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Go back, if you please, to the 9th and 10th verses: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come,"—we are not *going* to it, observe—"then that which is in part shall be done away."

And what is he speaking about? Divine charity, love; love is his text, and he talks about it in this way: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be

* A Sermon by the Editor. Printed from the Reporter's manuscript.

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burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." And what does he mean by charity? Love. Then he describes charity; and mark this: "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

Prophecies shall cease when they are all fulfilled; and by prophecy I do not mean the scientific or theological prophecy we have now, for it is all imperfect. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

This text is of widely-embracing, far-reaching extent, and I hardly know how to bring the subject before you in the most compact and suggestive manner. I wish you to think of two or three things connected with this great matter. And first I would remind you that God's processes, in both the material and moral worlds, are very slow. If we believe the geologists, His processes in the creation of the world were wonderfully slow. I am not here, however, either to vindicate or to oppose geological science; it is a science in which I take great pleasure, although, like everything else, our knowledge of it is partial, and geologists, like all other scientific men, differ among themselves, as also do theologians—a proof that we only know in part. We gather our proofs, in fact, from the very thing which at first filled us with surprise and consternation. God took a long time to fit the earth for the habitation of man, and it is a fact that the world is not finished yet, that the creative and changing processes are going on even now in the mighty ocean and throughout many parts of the earth. You speak often about the changes of the seasons. You tell us your old-fashioned summers and winters have gone. What does it mean? It means, if you will seriously think of it, that the creation is not completed, and will not be completed until the glorious words issue from the throne of Omnipotence: "Behold, I make all things new." The tabernacle of witness in the wilderness was but a type, a pilgrim, foreshadowing a resting-place—the temple. But the temple was made by hands, and served only for a time. The heathen rased it to its foundations; a second was built, and it, too, fell. We look for a city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God. We look for perfection. Now we live in an imperfect world, suitable enough for an imperfect race; an exposed house, rocked with storms and earthquakes, suitable enough for an imperfect tenant, ignorant, defiled, and feeble; an earth passing away to give place to a new one; mortal man passing away to give place to an immortal. Now change, then calmness, quietness, and lasting peace: now wars and wild tumults, then the battle-field is unknown, the sword and the spear are things forgotten, the Prince of Peace reigns—reigns *here*, mark that! We have not the least

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hint of change of locality. And I tell you faithfully, brethren, that, if we are not Christians now, whatever a baseless "Universalism" may say, there is not a Heaven in the universe that can make us better. God is forming character here, and upon character exclusively depends what men shall be hereafter.

Secondly, we come to man, the occupant of this wonderful world. What is he now? It is not wise to affect a mock humility. Undoubtedly we are imperfect beings. We have headaches and heartaches, pains and disappointments and vexations, burdens and troubles of many kinds. What does it all mean? Why, these things actually determine our present condition. We are not yet perfect, and everything around us partakes of the character that belongs to us mentally and morally. I say it is no use to affect humility; the best plan is at once to admit that morally, intellectually, physically, we are not perfect in any true sense. At the same time, do not forget the counsel I often given you; whilst you do not pretend to a humility of which you are not conscious, do not forget that by God's grace you are what you are. Do not go to the throne of grace, you who love Jesus Christ, telling Him that you are wretched sinners. This is poor praise to Him for saving you; but go to the throne of grace with profound thankfulness, glorifying in your Lord and Saviour. And then, what about our prayers? Whilst adoring God for redeeming love, let us ask grace to reach forward to greater heights in the Christian life, for we have yet much to learn. It is a very remarkable fact that Christians often seem to forget the very condition of their existence as Christians; namely, faith. What is faith? Faith *implies* imperfection. It means that we are trusting in Christ that He will complete the work He has begun in us. Faith! Watch that little child taking its mother's hand, or grasping its mother's dress; *that* is faith. The child is conscious that the mother loves it, and that the mother's love is strong to protect. So I trust in my Father, God; and that trust *means* that I am weak, and that He is strong, and that He has things to give me which He will give me as I am capable of receiving them. The loving Lord lets me take hold of His hand or the hem of His garment, and I am upheld by His strength. We believe; the interpretation of which is, that we have not yet reached manhood, but that we are growing up in Christ.

And then, all this time, *now*, we are at school. Little boys do not like school. Of course not. Who ever yet liked the thing that was best for him in this world? Without Divine education we do not choose that which is good for us. It is distressing to be plunged in grief; it is saddening to have to wipe tears from one's eyes. But, brethren, it may be that that grief is gladness in the making, and that those tears by-and-bye shall crystallise into gems and sparkle upon your foreheads in the new age.

Now that these things are taking place we are at school learning

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to read, and the first lesson that the Christian learns consists of four letters, AB—BA, Abba; but, having learnt that lesson and having power to utter the word, and to have the feeling which the word implies, then you place yourself in God's school, and say that you are prepared to go through with your tasks and bear your burdens, His Christ, your Saviour, helping you. Now we get the discipline, the invaluable spiritual teaching. Man cannot become what God intends him to be without personal experience. My experience may help you a little, but only your own experience can bring the lesson home to you effectually. So that many of those things, which are of course annoying, vexatious, and painful, become through their teaching invaluable parts of that moral discipline which will by-and-bye culminate in the "then," the day which is coming. "Now" we are in the same world with the devil and his angels; the great adversary of God and man, the prince of the powers of the air, the god of this world is our watchful foe. People talk foolishly about the devil being "in hell." He will by-and-bye be imprisoned for a time; but now he is dangerously near us. Look at Christ in the wilderness; what does it mean? It means that He was going through every kind of temptation to which we are liable, and it means that we, too, are in the wilderness now, being tempted. But through grace we are furnished with weapons, with armour, with defence against his wiles. God knows his subtlety, and He has given us the coat of mail in which we are to resist the adversary, helmet, breast plate, and shield. We have all that "now." It is a characteristic of this dispensation of mingled light and darkness, joy and sorrow, smiles and tears. But what is the meaning of school? Surely it is not intended that the boy and the man are to continue at school always. Surely school means something which is temporary. The doors of the school will close when the boy has gone through his primary education; for there is no such thing as being thoroughly educated. What a boy acquires at school he employs in business in manhood. So of the school of God. It is preparatory to something which is coming when all will be known. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."

Let me now proceed for a short time to show you the other side of this question, and then my object will be gained. Brethren, if you and I determine to bear our burden like brave Christian men and to accept our discipline like loving children; if we make up our minds resolutely to accept the *now* with all its groans and pains and mysteries, we shall not be disappointed in our hope of the *then*. What is the peculiar glory *then?* "Face to face!" I shall see TRUTH as it is! Why, brethren, that is worth worlds! Truth as it is; not through coloured glass, not by guess work, but as it is! Oh! to see things as GOD sees them! We cannot "now;" we shall "then." And the Scripture proceeds upon the principle that when we see things as God sees them we shall

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glorify Him for all that we have seen of storm and tempest in times long gone past; we shall not have to guess at truth, to translate and compare, but we shall get the benefit when "*then*" comes of the great lessons we are learning "*now*." If any of you, my hearers, are strangers to God in Christ, and if you were transported to the *then* this moment, that is, if Christ should come to-day, you would miss the glory of Christian manhood, because you have not been trained in the school of faith, with all its invaluable lessons and culture and discipline. If you are to stand then face to face with Christ without shame, as the Apostle John sublimely puts it, you must now be in fellowship with Him by faith; you must often speak to Him now, and take your burden to Him now. Never was there a greater delusion than the mournfully popular one: "*If we get to heaven we shall be all right.*" It is false! It is the fraud of the adversary, one of the wiles of the devil. You would be all wrong if not Christ's, and would long to get out of that holy place if it were possible for you to ascend there. Heaven would be a consuming fire to the man who has not been in the purifying furnace before. We should value the discipline of the *now* because of its glorious connection with the *then*. "Then shall I know even as also I am known." Wonderful declaration!

Our Lord reveals the grand issue thus: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Spotless, brilliant, Christ-like. Redeemed men, at last in the spotless image of their glorious Redeemer! Now death, then life; now our props are stricken down from us, our earthly hopes are blasted; then we shall say what the Queen of Sheba said to Solomon, the type of the Prince of Peace: "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land . . . . . but the half was not told me." "We shall see Him *as He is*." We shall be *like Him*, is all that the apostle can say. That is *all*! But O! such an all! Heaven's language fails, for earth's ear is dull.

Now, once more, brethren, let me remind you that there is an inseparable connection in God's purpose between the now and the then. I have touched on that in passing, but I must dwell upon it for a few moments. My meaning is just this. Now by faith in Christ our Redeemer we get rid of the bondage and corruption of sin, but its effects are with us still. Now we are afflicted and chastened and are being sanctified; but the purest amongst us, who lives in constant communion with the Son of God, has his spots and stains. Now we are safe, as safe as we ever can be; but we are not yet out of the battle-field. We are exposed to the fiery darts of our adversaries, who accuse us before our God day and night. There is, as the apostle tells us, sorrow, tribulation, death, everything against us; but they are not able to kill us, for Christ is our life. The storm is raging outside, but we are in the Divine asylum; the dangers are near us, but an Omnipotent Hand has hold of us.

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Now God means this connection between the imperfect and the perfect to give us important instruction. Let us look. I see a multitude in brilliant robes with symbols of victory, a very splendid company. Who are they? Their dress is glorious as sunbeams; their songs of victory ring through the heavens; the beauty of their countenances is like the morning light. Who are they? "These are they who came out of great tribulation." Then are we to infer that that tribulation was a wondrous blessing to them? We are. What is that brought out of a terribly heated furnace? Gold. Why? To impress upon it the image of the Queen, and then it becomes current coin of the realm, legal, valuable. Brethren, think it not strange that gold purified in the furnace should be improved by the process. God's vessels in the Temple of Solomon were all of gold, beaten gold; mark that! The lamps and the lampstands were all one piece of beaten gold. Gold is the resurrection metal. God's children "then," when they shall shine forth in the kingdom of the Father, will be the beaten gold of His everlasting treasury, one for ever with the Son of His love.

So that, if we would have the hereafter with all its unspeakable joys, we must accept the here, with all its tears and groans; for salvation by grace does not set aside holy discipline. You say sometimes you cannot be God's children because He deals so roughly with you. I will tell you a secret; you are rough yourselves; and it is *because* you are His children that God deals so with you. These things are trying to flesh and blood, but flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom, but the man that had the flesh and blood and derived eternal profit from the trial. He will be perfect then. He is a child now; he will be a man then. When that which is perfect is come the partial will cease.

And, lastly, not only is there this inseparable connection between the present and the future in God's infinitely wise purpose, but He is working now towards the grand issue; and the grace which is given us now will culminate in the glory when Christ shall come. Do not forget that! It is the grand, glorious, blessed truth of Scripture that Christ shall come. We are not going to Him when we die; He is coming for us that we may live for ever. He said so, and we believe Him! Dear friends, let us endure if we be in the furnace, it is a happy sign; we shall get out of it by-and-bye vastly benefited. Why complain of this brief trial? What are threescore years and ten to eternity? "The trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Amen.

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. IV.

Birthday Signs and Wonders.

THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God—no earthly Providence.

A busy inquisitiveness respecting the loves and marriages of people not directly related to us, is the mark of a shallow and a vulgar mind, but that is better than the indifference bordering upon disgust with which some are prone to listen to a request from a servant to go to the wedding of a friend. Such, however, is not the temper of heaven. An ordinary mechanic, but of native nobility and delicacy of mind, being indeed of Royal blood, became near two thousand years ago an object of extraordinary interest to Angels.

He was about to take unto himself a wife, when his mind was disquieted, and a messenger was sent from heaven to console and assure him in his troubled sleep, while making the most extraordinary announcement that ever fell on human ears. Is Joseph an object of sympathetic interest to the heavenly world simply on account of his "economic" relationship to the wondrous Son? or have we here a revelation of the normal interest with which the simplest annals even of the humblest sons of earth are followed by the hosts of heaven. Wonderful things are now occurring in Judea in which "a certain priest" and his wife—a carpenter and his betrothed—form a group over which Gabriel wheels, and the nations of heaven pause breathless. And what is Judea? A province of a despised dependency of Rome, inhabited by a peculiar sect, everywhere spoken against. And what is Galilee, where Joseph contemplates an epoch in his humble life? A province despised by Judah. And where is Bethlehem? A huddle of grey houses on the last fertile border of the rocky wilderness south of Jerusalem—remarkable for nothing but its strange selection for kingly honour in the past, and its stranger connection with prophetic promise now awaited. This place of peasants, void of historical splendour and of material power, is treated as the humble earth among the planets, which has been selected from its nobler kindred to be the birthplace of man and to be that spot on which the King of all worlds stepped when He visited to redeem His people—when He came to be enthroned in the sacrificial robes of sorrowful self-abnegating love.

Still, in conformity with the rule of exalting them of low degree, the unnoted Nazareth of Galilee is the village which is to furnish the mother of our Lord. A simple sequestered maiden, unconscious of any earthly ambition, and finding it satisfied in her betrothal to an honest carpenter—a maiden doubtless pure and holy-minded, but undistinguished in culture or mental pre-eminence

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from the women she daily consorted with at the well—she is the elect of heaven, to be the one mortal whom the power of the Highest should overshadow and within whose earthly tabernacle a Divine Seed should clothe itself in flesh, that human spirits might afterwards find the way to clothe themselves in God.

With what a crown of joy and blessedness is this wild flower of Palestine bedecked. Gabriel is sent to her and hails her as one highly favoured and blessed among women. She opens her heart for the first of a long series of memorial treasures which were rent by the sword of sorrow that afterwards pierced it and escaped with her faith toward heaven. She makes haste to visit her cousin Elizabeth, respecting whom the angel had related a celebrated piece of gossip. And these two women, connected vitally with the greatest fact within the sphere of Time—so far women who never dreamt of uttering a word which posterity would remember—are made mouthpieces of the Holy Ghost. And Mary's song entered into the services of the historical Christian Church. Twice a day in our Protestant branch of it the *Magnificat* ascends to the Cathedral roofs, beating among the traceries and dying in its effects to rise higher.

And when the birth draws nigh, humility is to seek a lower depth, for not even in a humble home in lowly Bethlehem, but on the ledge of the caravanserai whereon the mules and dromedaries rested their nosebags, the Saviour of the world was laid. There, in the midst of the promiscuous crowd gathered for enumeration in the Roman census, He who makes Abraham's seed as the stars of the sky for multitude, entered Himself as an inhabitant of the world of Force which He was to redeem by Love. There, amongst beasts of the stall, by the breath of whom it is no idle tradition to suppose his infancy was comforted, the Redeemer of brutes as well as men opened His eyes amid the lowliest circumstances that could possibly be prepared. But it was fitting that He, who is indeed man's *Inn*, an Inn whose doors are always open and in which there is always room, should have found no room or welcome in the Inn at Bethlehem.

To whom came the tidings first? Again it is the lowly that are selected for honour and privilege. Men from the fields, shepherds by their garb and accoutrements, are disturbing the caravanserai by night and making the sleepers' tongues to buz by their strange inquiries and reports. The Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger they do find at last, just as the Angel told them, and Mary lays their marvellous story within her swelling heart upon the top of Gabriel's salutation and the anthem of Elizabeth.

Meanwhile Jerusalem is troubled. The star-led company of Magi from the distant East have ended their long journey at the sacred city, and as vendors press their wares upon them, and innkeepers importune for their custom, they answer nothing but a mad inquiry,

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"Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship Him." Herod's spies soon scent that language; and while they are lamenting the disappearance of the star, and continuing their inquiries in vain, they are summoned to the palace. Dreams without Angels for Herod! The Sanhedrim is convened, the prophets are ransacked. The wise men saddle and load, and turn their faces towards Bethlehem.

And now as they disappear beyond the southern gates let us think of them and their age, for they are worth thinking about.

"What fools!" is the verdict of our age upon them. If they had only been possessed by a sensible utilitarian spirit they would never have undertaken a long and perilous journey with the unaccountable object of paying homage to a babe. What good could a babe do them? and of what earthly service is paying homage? The babe, too, is no king, either *de facto* or *de jure*. No one acknowledges his right, or keeps for him a kingdom. If they had taken the North Star as their guide, and prepared an expedition to discover the exact piece of ice which constituted the North Pole, there would have been some sense in it, but they appear to be bereft of any practical considerations. The gold which they carry would have done much to curry favour with the court, but instead they alarm it by professing allegiance to a new dynasty, and preserve their gifts for the coming King. In addition to this, when their guiding star disappeared they never think of returning home as sensible men would do, keeping quiet ever after the history of their Quixotic enterprise and its ridiculous issue.

Here we will leave the present age, for the wise men have discovered their star, and are going on their way rejoicing.

It is no conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, such as about that time appeared in the heavens, and is now again seen with Venus, once in the lifetime of this generation. It is a meteor, such as flames in the Northern skies in November—a bundle of gases, lit for the purpose and made to stand and expire over the house where the young child was—if, indeed, it was not solely visible to those who loved and followed it, symbol so of all religious light. Here then at last their journey ends. Here is the accomplished object of tedious and dangerous pilgrimage. Here is the satisfaction of desire to these old wise men, for is not desire perfected when Duty's voice is stilled, and Duty sings a lullaby to the tired obedient child!

Old men, as you bow before that lowly cradle we bow to you. There is not in this nineteenth century an example like to yours! And now that you have unrolled the gold and spread the frankincense and myrrh, you may return. You *must* return, God tells you, by another way. You shall never hear on earth those words this puling infant you adore will speak, words that the winds and waves will stop to hear, and the dead will answer; words that will

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scatter devils and make fountains in the hearts of the impure; words that lay deep and strong the bases of an everlasting kingdom. You shall die without knowledge that this King will die for you. But will you never know?

Mary's heart is all aflame again. This homage and these presents, this star, these angel hosts. But meantime, will not angels, or shepherds, or Magi give some shelter to the babe, some extra comforts to the mother? No! These offerings are sacred, must be carefully preserved. Joseph is fumbling in his garments for some poor coins, the remnants of a carpenter's small earnings. Nothing is to screen or save the holy child from participation in the common lot. But how infinitely pathetic to think of the thirty years of deferred hope and expectation that were to follow for Mary, and the failure in a shameful death of the grand promise with which the ministry commenced.

We have not done with Bethlehem. House of Bread, Bethlehem Ephratah, Fruitful House of Bread. It is a good name for the birthplace of a Shepherd King. And in Bethlehem Moab—proscribed and cursed Moab—joined itself to the lineage of our Lord. It is a good birthplace for Him in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Beside Bethlehem is Rachel's tomb; it is a good birthplace for the Destroyer of Death and the remover of woman's curse. For when her soul was in departing she called her last boy Benoni; and now the Man of sorrows comes to banish sorrow, and will one day wipe away tears from off all faces.

And hard by is the bitter end of Jordan, running in that long gash upon the earth's crust which we might suppose the sword of Abaddon to have made in his impotent rage at the promise of Messiah. Jordan, type of the history of every lost and ruined soul, sprouting from the snows of Hermon, yet turbid near its source, tinging Tiberias with a darker streak, and rolling its muddy waters in ever-deepening valleys and beneath precipices of ever greater threatening, until it is lost without remedy in the sea of Death, beneath which the Jews by tradition placed a lake of fire. There on the edge of the barren wilderness and of salt that had lost its savour, and in view of the Sea of Death, shall the Saviour of the world be born.

"Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." So sang the angel to a group of humble men, whose ears had only listened for the jackal and the wolf. High was their function to feed and nourish and protect a flock. The shepherding of men, and not the spoiling of them, being just the want that hangs the sword of Damocles above the triumph of modern civilisation, and spots the feast with poison. The glory from the opening heavens lit the green plateau, and then it was seen how the tended sheep and goats trod mid a blaze of red anemones and poppies, as though the Passover had already spilt their blood, and mingled with them, scented more than seen, were aromatic herbs,

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such as stupefied the vinegar that was tendered dying lips and entered into the spices that were prepared for the embalming. The retiring olive and the forward fig bordered the fields, the pale leafage of the former betokening the modesty of true sanctity, and the bold configuration of the latter, with its seed-full fruit, the fecundity of the principles of that kingdom which after, like a tree overshadowing the earth, will doubtless shoot its branches till they enmesh the stars. Round about the shepherd's vale are the glistering escarpments of the dolomite, gleaming like sheeted ghosts risen at the resurrection, and the white rock is streaked with scarlet as though earth itself was struggling after Incarnation. Here then are fit place and persons for the Herald Angels' song. "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Let us go with the new reading: "Peace among men of good will"—for was there not always goodwill toward men on the part of God, but between the first and second advents there is no peace but among the men of goodwill.

"On earth peace." Near two thousand years have passed, and Bethlehem contains the most turbulent and resentful community in Palestine. Frederika Bremer stumbled through the stubble of an adjacent field upon whose standing corn the Bedouin had swooped to wreck it, invited by a Bethlehemite family thus to avenge a private feud. Tristram saw the cultivators in Galilee holding the plough with one hand and a weapon in the other, while the shepherds of Esdraelon were mounted and laden with arms; this is his account of the "Peace on earth" in Palestine, and how the Turks are governing the country. He is crossing the famed plain of Esdraelon, and says, "The corn of this year's harvest had never been reaped, owing to the war. Only a few weeks ago the Sakk's Bedouin, the strongest tribe on the west side of Jordan, made a raid and swept off the whole of the cattle on the plain. The protection of the Government has been found worse than the enemy. The Turkish troops judiciously selected the finest fields of standing corn for their camping ground, to save trouble in foraging, and in many instances levied heavy fines on the luckless villagers for the crime of non-resistance to the Sakk's. When they appealed against this on the ground of helplessness, they were told that the males ought to have fled in and reinforced the Turkish troops. Finally, after the Turkish locusts had eaten everything the Arabian hailstorm had left, the Pasha of Acre published despatch announcing the retreat of the invaders before his trium-

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phant legions (who always kept two days between them and the fugitives), and the campaign closed for the year."

The promise of the First Advent will not be fulfilled until the Second. HENRY DEACON.

Bristol.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument Against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. III.

III.—OUR LORD'S REPLY.

FIRST.—THE AUTHORITATIVE PORTION OF THE REPLY.

This is contained in these three verses: Luke xx. 34—"And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world"—age—"marry, and are given in marriage: 35—"But they which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world"—age—"and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: 36—"Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Though we have divided the Reply into two portions, it must be admitted, and taken into account, that to a certain extent they run into each other; or, which is nearly the same thing, have a close mutual bearing, as well as an independent nature and significance of their own. The vital idea in the whole response is the Resurrection; every ray converges down into that.

While Jesus blamed the Sadducees, according to Matthew, for not discerning what was presented in their Scriptures, we are not, however, thereby required to hold them inexcusably ignorant as to all He delivered on this occasion in their hearing. For instance, His announcement that the resurrected, being worthy, are to stand on an equality with the angels of light, has all the appearance of being a fresh revelation, since it is never even once hinted at, so far as our knowledge extends, in the Hebrew Scriptures. But even if that peculiar feature of the resurrection-life is to be excepted, the questioners might have found the fundamental doctrine itself in the sacred oracles, along with certain indications that supreme and sovereign Mercy designed the new existence to be perpetual. As to *that*, error could be inscribed on their opinions. And thus, though the sections are not perfectly dissimilar, there is enough to warrant the proposed division, and to serve the object of perspicuity it has been adopted.

Having thus written a word in explanation of our method, we proceed to examine what the Lord delivers AUTHORITATIVELY, that

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is, IN HIS OWN NAME, as the "Word"—Revealer—"of God," without any direct appeal to the Old Testament, which would have thrown it, like the second portion, into the argumentative form.

In the AUTHORITATIVE PART we find several points of instruction:

1st.—*There is to be another world for man.*

This is not the only scene of existence they are to witness, "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world"—the world in store for resurrected men. It is the same word in the original translated "world" in the two expressions found in the reply, "this world," verse 34, and "that world," verse 35. In both it means *age*, or condition of things. In the present age, or epoch, its sons, or its inhabitants, marry, and are given in marriage; but in that age, or under that constitution of things, there will be a different arrangement for its sons, those who are privileged to behold its wonders.

In the meantime it would be out of place for us to enter on an inquiry as to the locality of the promised age, or new system of things; and for the present it will answer all purposes to put *heaven* instead of "that world," and then *earth* may take the place of "this world." By this arrangement the contrast is brought out more vividly and perspicuously; the contrast between men on earth as it is now, with the existing social state on the planet, and men in heaven, the paradisiacal region.

2nd.—*Into "that world"*—the celestial land—*men enter by a resurrection.*

The age is in the future, beyond death and the grave. As they "sleep" during the interval between death and the resurrection, just as happened in the case of our Lord Himself, they must be summoned from Sheol to life that they may enter on the resplendent age; in other words, a resurrection is essential to their admission within its bounds. Since the resurrection is not yet past, we know where they are at present; but, thank God, the bars of their gloomy dungeon are by-and-bye to be broken for their escape. Here is a direct contradiction of the Sadducees—THERE SHALL BE A RESURRECTION; and those who read can make a choice, and the choice involves eternal consequences, between the denial of the questioners and the affirmation of the Son of God.

But there is more than an announcement of a resurrection. A peculiarity exists in the case of those who are to reach that world—the heavenly clime—by rising from the dead, and it will strike persons acquainted with the Greek in a moment. Resurrection for them is essentially eclectic; it is a resurrection not merely from the dead, but *from amongst* the dead. A literal translation of the original rendered in our version, "the resurrection from the dead," would run thus: *the resurrection, that one* (that special or distinctive one) *from amongst* (EK) *the dead men*, or corpses.

The following passages illustrate the same peculiarity. In all of them the preposition *ek* (its other form is *ex*) indubitably expresses

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election and *preference*. John xv. 19, "I have chosen you out of (*ex*elexamen) the world," &c.; Acts vi. 3, "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out from among (*ex*) you seven men of honest report," &c.; Acts xv. 14, "Simeon hath declared, how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of (*ex*) them a people for His name;" Acts xxvi. 23, "That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from (*ex*, out from among) the dead," &c.; Heb. v. 1, "For every high priest taken from among (*ex*) men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God," &c.

Thus we discover that the promise of Jesus, when its complete force is apprehended, amounts to this: saints are to be resurrected *out from among* the dead; and when so understood it affords us clear vision into the significance of Paul's words, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philip. iii. 11). To the ordinary reader, that is not, all things taken into account, a very intelligent statement; let the Greek, however, be rendered exactly, and immediately we realise and appreciate the intensity of his desires, the resurrection *from amongst* the dead. To win that—"the better resurrection"—he was striving, enduring tribulation, and at all times prepared even for martyrdom itself. No wonder, for he knew beyond a doubt that it, and it only—resurrection *from amongst* the dead—would conduct him into "that world" spoken of by his Lord and Redeemer. His intense anxiety was to be assigned a part in the "first resurrection"—"the resurrection of the just"—at the commencement of the Millennium, being aware that over him then, and over all in his gracious position, the "second death" would have no power. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection: on such the *second death* hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 6).

3rd.—*In "that world" marriage is unknown:* they "neither marry nor are given in marriage."

The Sadducees asked Him whose wife the woman would be in the resurrection, and this is His reply. In order to make His doctrine appear absurd, at the least to thrust forward a difficulty—an insuperable difficulty, as they thought—which it suggested to their embittered acumen, they framed their question, and Jesus sweeps it away by merely announcing that the institution of marriage would then be abolished, society would then be differently constituted, and the propagation of the race would cease. To contend that the distinction of sex will then be done away, would be extracting from the words more than they contain, and we decline to indulge in any speculations on the subject. Time will disclose the full meaning of the prediction, and we may tarry in contentment for the arrival of the celestial era, when we shall know even as we are known.

4th.—*The resurrected, being worthy, are to be immortal:* "neither can they die any more."

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How are we to interpret "die" here? Exactly as the Sadducees understood it. With them death was the opposite of conscious life, as when they narrated to Jesus the fact that "the woman died also." Then, the death believers can never be subjected to again is identical in kind with that under whose dominion the Patriarchs, for instance, were held at the hour of the interview, and long before it occurred. They were unconscious in Sheol, the grave; their souls, the men themselves, were there. They, not a part of them merely, had seen corruption. For the present, they were as if they had never been. But to that state of desolation and oblivion they can by no possibility return after the resurrecting fiat has summoned them to newness of life. In their eternal home "there shall be no more death" (Rev. xxi. 4). Now they rest in hope of a revival to conscious being, and that hope is one to which the infinity of Heaven's power, and the inviolability of Heaven's promise, is pledged. "These all, having a good report through faith, received *not* the promise"—they did not at death ascend heavenward to enter on its possession—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they WITHOUT US should not be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 39, 40).

Now let us observe what a miserable lessening, as we view it, of the import of this assurance the common idea of a Christian's death produces on the Saviour's language. Surely it is unnecessary to explain at length what that conception is. Suffice it to write: the religious teaching of the period represents them—or their souls or their spirits—passing away at the final hour to glory. There is a little period of gloom, and then all is bright in the "Happy Land;" they are admitted forthwith to the beatific vision; they stand before the throne of the Lamb, and in an ecstasy of gratitude and adoration cast their crowns at His feet, singing the while, in concert with the angelic throng, the anthems of triumph and gladness. In all sobriety of mind, IS THAT DEATH? Bears it any resemblance to death? Rather is it not life in its sublimest form? One wonders what they need a resurrection for, and where the immense comfort lies in the sacred pledge, "neither can they die any more." The first death was the gate to heaven, surely no great calamity; a second might only once more be a transient eclipse, and another heaven bursts upon their enraptured gaze! Enoch was translated that he might *not see death*, or die; but between his case and that of the saint who expires in the presence of weeping friends, and in the twinkling of a star is in heaven, where lies the immense difference? They are both in glory, and it greatly puzzles us to know, if the saint who sees death is immediately carried by angels to eternal bliss, how much more favoured the ancient translated worthy could be. The "Master" must intend far more than our limping theology assigns to His speech. He employed no vain, meaningless words; and when He conveyed a promise, and especially such a magnificent one as this seems to

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be, He intended it to enclose substantial worth, commensurate with the vastness of His designs and the depth of His love.

We are compelled, therefore, to forsake what seems, in all candour, to be but a mirage of fable, for the enduring reality of truth. Death is death, not life; and when our Lord affirmed resurrected saints can "die" no more, we are elevated to the contemplation of an unspeakable assurance. It is a promise from Him who "cannot lie" of being, instead of non-being; it is light instead of the blackness of Hades; it is immortality, *not by nature*, but the GIFT OF GOD imparted to those who, on the awakening morn, are to be constituted equal to the heavenly messengers.

Let it be added, the words, "neither can they die any more," are far stronger than even an assertion that they are to live "for ever," since "for ever" is used in Scripture, as with ourselves, in a varying, and indeed often in a very limited acceptation. Thank God, once more, there is something to fix the meaning of the phrase, "everlasting life," and the words now engaging our attention leave its import beyond all controversy. They CANNOT DIE! Founded on that, and on the other testimonies of Jesus, such as "They shall never perish" (John x. 28), and "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19), the believer's hope is built upon a rock solid and immovable as the throne of God. Uncertainty is absolutely debarred. The thought is overwhelming, the vision into the future indescribably glorious. In that paradisiacal scene there is light that will not grow dim; joy subject to no access of decay; inquiries that will not be arrested; love that the revolution of pauseless cycles will not quench; songs that will not cease; youth that cannot be weakened by age, and mental vigour that no activity may enfeeble, no catastrophe overthrow. That is immortality, and immortality through Jesus, "the Resurrection and the Life," "Who died for us that, whether we wake or sleep, we should"—at last in glory—"live together with Him" (1 Thess. v. 10).

5th.—*Those admitted into "that world" are "equal unto the angels,"* or, according to Matt. xxii. 30, "are as the angels of God in heaven."

The same historian represents the "Master" as instituting a parallel between the condition of the resurrected just and the heavenly intelligences named, and perhaps assigning the resemblance as a reason for the non-existence of marriage among the saved: "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage: but are as the angels of God in heaven." Luke rather connects it with the deathless existence they are to inherit: "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels." Very likely it was intended to have a bearing in both quarters: towards the discontinuance of marriage, for saints in glory are as the angels; and towards their deathlessness; supplying, at the same time, a somewhat familiar illustration of it. In that

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respect they are on a level with the heaven-born messengers. Like those exalted worshippers, who have in no instance swerved from their allegiance, the ransomed ones are to be elevated above the circumstances of mortality, and so transformed that their relationships, and, for aught we know, their modes of intercourse, will be quite different from those we are acquainted with. It would not be justifiable to push the destined similarity beyond the points indicated by the prophetic description, so astonishing in the grandeur of its lines and colouring. In passing beyond what is written, we tread the fields of imagination, where we cease to expound and begin to invent. But while restraining ourselves within the limits of what is on the record, we may safely observe that, be the features of resemblance between the saved and the angelic society what they may, the standard of perfected being for His saints will be the resurrected and glorified Redeemer Himself. They "shall be LIKE HIM;" beaming after His manner in the effulgence of day; endowed with untiring energies; with powers of rapid and mysterious movement under their control, such as He showed when He tarried on earth for a brief time after leaving the sepulchre, and when He ascended to the loftiest seat in the celestial abodes; or when, in His boundless compassion, and for the world's weal, He revisited our sphere, illumined with excessive splendours, to make a captive of Saul, rushing blindly on in his persecuting fury.

6th.—*Those who enter "that world . . . are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*"

This is their title—children, or sons, of God; and a higher and sweeter designation is unknown in the universe. It is first conferred on a member of our sinful, mortal race, when he believes the record about Jesus as God's gift to him of eternal life. Whoever accepts that—assures himself that the gift is his in Jesus—is born of the truth into the heavenly family. In sending His Son into the world, the Father made a gift of "everlasting life" to each of its inhabitants; and it remains with us to determine whether, by each saying for himself, "THE LIFE IS MINE!" we shall be enrolled for immortality; or, by refusing to adopt that appropriating language, doom ourselves to remain among the condemned, and, having put life away, finally to perish. In believing the message—holding it to be a true saying of God, and not a lie—men are renewed in character, enjoyments and aspirations; in short, become Jesus-like, whose meat and whose drink was to execute His Father's will. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in"—by believing the testimony about—"Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). But this enrolment and change of character—the new birth—is only the commencing step in the heaven-born child's destiny. It involves untold privileges, bought with the Lamb's precious blood; and in its duration stretches forward parallel with "the ages of the ages." "If children, then HEIRS; HEIRS OF GOD, and JOINT HEIRS

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WITH CHRIST" (Rom. viii. 17). Now, to eyes unenlightened, it is a meagre privilege to belong to the Divine society; time, however, will correct that enormous blunder. Their Lord was once poor and despised—His position was altogether misapprehended; but how is it with Him now? How will it be when He returns in flaming fire, attended by His holy myriads? So with His true, humble, and spiritually-minded followers, when the gates of the resplendent future are thrown wide open: "Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2). Then comes the "*manifestation* of the sons of God;" then they will know what it is to be a member of the heavenly circle; then the unfoldings of Infinite Goodness will surpass their faintest conception in this clouded scene. When called from the slumber of the grave by their descended Lord—Himself "the first-born from the dead," the new birth—fitness in every respect for their exalted life will be entailed upon them in its completest measure: the mortal putting on immortality, the corruptible exchanged for incorruption. That is the manifestation of their sonship. Then will be opened up to their understanding what the privilege means, and all that it involves. Then, but not till then, will such sayings as these be comprehended: "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. i. 4); "Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption"—from the grave—"of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory" (verses 13, 14); and on that day these words, when interpreted by the consummation of the event, will have an exceeding wealth of meaning, never dreamt of whilst the child of God was in this vale of tears, wearied with the agonies and soiled with the dust of conflict,—"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new!" (2 Cor. v. 17).

That man—insensate, godless man—should have such a destiny within his reach, is enough to disturb, with unknown pangs of shame and remorse, the most hardened sinner. There it swells and broadens, like a noble river, disclosing a depth of mercy for each of us that an archangel may not sound. Happy they who, looking up to their Saviour, and on and on to the grandeur, and the glory, and the transport, and the vision, can say with faltering lips, but with immovable confidence in their hearts, It is all mine! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!" (1 John iii. 1).

7th.—"*Only those who are accounted worthy shall obtain that world.*

There can be no difficulty in understanding this restriction, and it is of the last moment to preserve it in mind. A mistake here is fatal and irreparable. The priceless blessings have been brought

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within the reach of all who hear the Gospel tidings; only a well-defined class, however, are appointed to enjoy them, and the appointment is unalterable as the decrees of fate. "Even so hath the Lord ordained." If there were no condition, an endless hereafter, and its sonship and its glory, would come to each of us independent of our choice, as the rising of the sun or the falling of showers. But the blessings are ordained only for the "worthy." Now there are two kinds of worthiness mentioned in the Sacred Volume, one of *merit* and one of *meetness*. The labourer is worthy of his hire; he deserves his recompense, it would be *injustice* to keep it back from him. In this sense, no one can be pronounced worthy of the high privileges mentioned in these verses. Would it be injustice, would it be a wrong, to the sinner, not to pardon him? to the condemned, not to save his life? Such language would be an outrage on common sense; a contradiction is involved in the very terms. Justice calls for something very different from salvation to the guilty. No one, we are persuaded, however thoughtless, would have the audacity to affirm that the Almighty was obliged to present a gift of eternal life to each member of our species. We have no claims on Him for a continuation of temporal life, much less, as grievous offenders, have we a claim on Him for immortality. He deals with us in time as He pleases; and in the grander gift, He consults exclusively His own purposes, which, O wonderful thought! are the evolution of His boundless pity for man.

But though the worthiness is not—cannot be—of merit, we shall discover its true explanation in *meetness*. It is a worthiness wrought by Heaven's own hand, into which the element of claim, in its rigid and primitive sense, never enters. "We are *made meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and that meetness—that preparedness—is accomplished here. It is produced not by the counsels of philosophy, nor by the culture of learning, nor by influences from the beautiful in nature, nor by famous worldly exploits, nor by iron self-discipline in the cloisters of ascetic retirement. They who are to see that world, turning from what has been styled inward whisperings—delusive whisperings they are—of permanence hereafter, and from the arch-tempter's lie in Eden, accept the munificent donation of "everlasting life" by accepting Jesus, the life-giver; have been renewed in the temper of their minds; have taken up the cross; have set their affections on things above; are looking in love for the reappearing of their Lord; are keeping their garments undefiled; are seeking "for glory, honour, and immortality" (Rom. ii. 7). And it is all of grace from the earliest moment to the last! To such the King of Glory—the Vanquisher of Hades—says, "They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy" (Rev. iii. 4). A guest at the marriage supper in our Lord's parable (Matt. xxii. 11) was cast out because he presented himself not arrayed in the wedding garment. Apology for his conduct, there was none; solace in his doom, there

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was none. The regal entertainer had supplied at his own cost a robe for each person invited to the feast. Without it, no one was worthy, or fitted, to occupy his place in the banqueting apartment. A lesson and a warning to each of us, as we look into the scenes of hereafter—only they who to the Omniscient Eye are reckoned worthy obtain "that world." Sitting in judgment on ourselves, what propect have we?

In virtue of a moral and spiritual resemblance to Him, and a consecration to His service, the co-heirs enter at last into the Heavenly Land, where the "worm" of Sheol will cover them no more, and where all tears are wiped from their eyes. What imperilled their hope of immortality once? *Sin*, the deadly thing, from which they escaped. No one abiding under its dominion can live for ever. Only the pure in heart climb the green heights of unending being, and with vision at no time to be darkened, behold the celestial kingdoms and the splendours thereof. Sin is antagonistic to God, it is a blot on His universe. In relation to man, it is the Destroyer. This portentous fact is not generally realised in its alarming significance. Nevertheless, it has the leprous taint, for which there is no cure but the touch of Jesus. The Bible proclaims "death!" in the ears of the ungodly, from its earliest to its closing utterances. Instead of imitating its method and tone, the wild cry of torment hereafter is with lamentable frequency addressed to the unsaved; and so the order and guiding law of the universe is misrepresented. Torment is intensified life, not death, which is the thing to be averted from those who are to rise incorruptible from the tomb.

Before entering on the last great department of our subject, we request the reader to observe that, while the Lord Jesus explicitly answers the demand of the Sadducees about the woman, and while He adds more information out of His prophetic stores than the question warranted us to expect, all is characterised by a *reserve* as to details fitted only to gratify an empty curiosity regarding the future, or, as Paley expresses it, "the invisible world." That celebrated writer accepted a theology, still popular, as to man in an after state—perhaps never questioned it in the course of his studious labour; but on that ground we must not undervalue his penetration when he describes the manner in which these solemn topics are handled by the inspired guides:

"I lay a stress," he writes, "on this reserve, because *it repels the suspicion of enthusiasm*; for enthusiasm is wont to expatiate upon the condition of the departed, above all other subjects, and with a wild particularity. It is, moreover, a topic which is always listened to with greediness The teacher, therefore, whose principal purpose is to draw upon himself attention, is sure to be full of it. The Koran of Mahomet is *half made* up of it." —*Evidences*, p. 210.

Some may deem it presumptuous, yet we hazard the remark, that the author of the quotation just made would not, had he un-

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derstood the Bible more accurately, have used the expression, "the condition of the departed," unless he meant thereby the state of human beings beyond the judgment, which his creed, as to the saved and lost, does not leave in uncertainty. But we are not sure even of that. So there is a mistiness—a confusion—about the passage, which all are destined to manifest whose faith is a blending of God's truth and earth-born error. Nevertheless, what he brings to notice is acute and memorable, and is as applicable to the teaching of inspiration on the eternal future as to what he supposed its teaching to be. There is no accumulation of minute details, nothing to please a morbid curiosity, nothing to draw away our thoughts from immediate obligation, and the conspicuous and all-important fact of immortality by a resurrection for the worthy alone; leaving the mysterious hereafter to unfold its lesser and encompassing realities to those who enter on its transcendant fields. Enthusiasts are carried away by their fancies, which widen and blaze as they run. The occult—what is behind the veil—is a favourite topic, and more particularly as it has little affinity with conscience and present duty. The Divine Spirit, whose wisdom is perfect, stops when enough is said for man's immediate requirement.

(*To be continued.*)

RICHARD BAXTER ON CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

THE Lord Jesus in wisdom and tender mercy established a law of grace, and rule of life, pure and perfect, but simple and plain; laying the condition of man's salvation more in the honesty of the believing heart, than in the strength of wit, and subtlety of a knowing head. He comprised the truths which were of necessity to salvation in a narrow room; so that the Christian faith was a matter of great plainness and simplicity. As long as Christians were such and held to this, the Gospel rode in triumph through the world, and an omnipotency of the Spirit accompanied it, bearing down all before it. Princes and sceptres stooped; subtle philosophy was nonplust; and all useful sciences came down, and acknowledged themselves servants, and took their places, and were well contented to attend the pleasure of Christ. . . . .

The serpent envying this happiness of the Church, hath no way to undo us, but by drawing us from our Christian simplicity. By the occasion of heretics' quarrel and errors, the serpent steps in, and will needs be a spirit of zeal in the Church: and he will so overdo against heretics, that he persuades them they must enlarge their creed, and add this clause against one, and that against another, and all was but for the perfecting and preserving of the Christian faith. And so he brings it to be a matter of so much wit to be a Christian (as Erasmus complains), that ordinary heads

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were not able to reach it. He had got them with a religious, zealous cruelty to their own and others' souls, to lay all their salvation, and the peace of the Church, upon some unsearchable mysteries about the Trinity, which God either never revealed, or never clearly revealed, or never laid so great a stress upon; yet he persuades them that there was Scripture proof enough for these; only the Scripture spoke it but in the premises, or in darker terms, and they must but gather into their creed the consequences, and put it into plainer expressions, which heretics might not so easily corrupt, pervert, or evade. Was not this reverent zeal? And was not the devil seemingly now a Christian of the most judicious and forward sort?

Yea, and where modesty restrains men from putting all such inventions and explications in their creed, the devil persuades men, that these being the judgments of godly reverent divines (no doubt to be reverenced, valued, and heard), it is almost as much as if they were in the creed, and therefore whoever dissenteth must be noted with a black coal, and you must disgrace him, and avoid communion with him as an heretic. Hence lately is your union, communion, and the Church's peace, laid upon certain unsearchable mysteries about predestination, the order and object of God's decrees, the manner of the Spirit's most secret operations on the soul, the nature of the will's essential liberty, and its power of self-determining; the Divine concourse, determination or predestination of man's, and all other creatures' actions, &c.; that he is scarcely accounted to be a fit member for our fraternal communion that differs from us herein. Had it not been for this one plot, the Christian faith had been kept pure; religion had been one; the Church had been one; and the hearts of Christians had been more one than they are. Had not the devil turned orthodox, he had not made so many true Christians heretics, as Epiphanius and Austin have enrolled in the black list. Had not the enemy of truth and peace got into the chair, and made so pathetic an oration as to inflame the minds of the lovers of truth to be over-zealous for it, and to do too much, we might have had truth and peace to this day. Yea, still, if he see any man of experience and moderation stand up to reduce men to the ancient simplicity, he presently seems the most zealous for Christ, and tells the inexperienced leaders of the flocks, that it is in favour of some heresy that such a man speaks; he is plotting a carnal syncretism, and attempting the reconcilement of Christ and Belial; he is tainted with Popery, or Socinianism, or Arminianism, or Calvinism, or whatsoever may make him odious with those he speaks to. O what the devil hath got by over-doing!

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"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU."

1. THE holy peace that Jesus gives
   Sustains the heart in hours of grief,
   Brings to the troubled mind relief,
   And he who has it truly lives.

2. A calm in storm, a song by night,
   A refuge when the waves arise,—
   Or sorrow forces tears and sighs,—
   The lamp of hope diffusing light.

3. The solid peace that Christ bestows,
   Speaks not of church, or creed, or clime,
   It is His peerless gift sublime,
   That from redeeming love outflows.

4. Who has it, has the sacred seal
   Of union with the living Head
   Who rose triumphant from the dead,
   For them and their eternal weal.

5. Speak peace to us, O gracious Lord,
   To make us strong amidst our cares,
   To keep us from surrounding snares,
   As promised in Thy Holy Word. THETA.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT—CIRCUMCISION.

THE longed-for posterity is to be given, that is settled. And it is not to spring from Eliezer but from Abram himself, that also is settled. But it has not yet been put past all doubt that Sarai is to be the mother as truly as Abram the father of the promised offspring; and the episode of the sixteenth chapter shows that at this point even the faith of Abram would be all the stronger if it had express assurance to lean upon. This assurance is at length graciously given, and the time draws near when the hope beyond hope is to be realised. Everything must forthwith be put in readiness; and now that the flesh is to rise to the service of faith, the covenant of faith may come down in a sign into the flesh of the chosen family.

GENESIS xvii. 1-21.

"So it comes to pass that Abram is ninety and nine years of age. Then Yehweh appears unto Abram and says to him:

"*I* am God Almighty: walk thou before Me and become complete;

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(2) that I may grant My covenant betwixt Me and thee and may multiply thee exceedingly.

"(3) Then falls Abram upon his face, and God speaks unto him saying:—

"(4) As for ME, lo! MY COVENANT is with thee; so shalt thou be father of a multitude of nations; (5) and thy name shalt not be called Abram any more, since Abraham is thy name, for to be father of a multitude of nations have I appointed thee. (6) So will I make thee very fruitful indeed, and grant thee to be nations; yea, KINGS from thee shall come forth. (7) So will I confirm My covenant betwixt Me and thee and thy seed after thee to their generations as a covenant of olam, becoming to thee a God and to thy seed after thee. (8) So will I give to thee and to thy seed after thee the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, as a possession of olam. So will I be to them a God.

"(9) Then says God unto Abraham: But as for THEE, My covenant shalt thou keep, thou and thy seed after thee to their generations. (10) THIS is My covenant which ye shall keep betwixt Me and you and thy seed after thee:—That every male be circumcised to you. (11) When ye are circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, then is it a sign of the covenant betwixt Me and you. (12) Even A BOY EIGHT DAYS OLD shall be circumcised to you, every male to your generations; born of a household, or bought with silver from any son of a stranger, though HE be not of thy seed: (13) he must surely be circumcised, born of thy household or bought with thy silver: so indeed shall My covenant be in your flesh as a covenant of olam. (14) But an uncircumcised male who does not become circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, then is that soul cut off from his kinsfolk: My covenant has he made void.

"(15) Then says God unto Abraham: As for SARAI THY WIFE, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name. (16) So will I bless her, and even give from her to thee a son; yea I will bless her, so shall she come to be nations—KINGS OF PEOPLES from her shall arise.

"(17) Then falls Abraham on his face and laughs, and says in his heart:—

"To one a hundred years old shall a child be born?
And shall even Sarah who is ninety years old give birth?

"(18) Then says Abraham unto God Himself: Oh that ISHMAEL might live before Thee!

"(19) And God says: Verily, SARAH THY WIFE is about to bear thee a son; so shalt thou call his name Isaac, so I will confirm my covenant with him as a covenant of olam, to his seed after him. (20) Moreover, as for ISHMAEL, I have heard thee: lo, I will certainly bless him, and make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly. Twelve princes shall he beget: thus will I grant him to become a great nation. (21) But MY COVENANT will I confirm with Isaac, whom SARAH shall bear to thee by this set time next year."

In considering how this portion of the sacred narrative bears upon our subject, let us give good heed to the following points.

1. Abram has for several years been in covenant with God—some sixteen years having now elapsed since the transaction recorded in the fifteenth chapter took place.

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2. Accordingly, all through these verses the Divine covenant is spoken of definitely as already in existence and as familiar to Abram's mind. Thus, whereas in the fifteenth chapter the words are "God cut up A COVENANT with Abram," now it is simply "MY covenant," which is said to be "with" Abram, which God now proposes to "grant" or fulfil, and of which God now proceeds to give "a sign;" but which He does not once speak of as though it were not yet in existence.

3. Nevertheless, on the very eve of initiating the fulfilment, God calls upon Abram to perfect his character if he wishes to see the covenant promises made good. "*I* am God Almighty: walk thou before Me and become complete, that I may grant My covenant," &c. Thus persistently is the whole making and fulfilling of the covenant used to subserve the purpose of educating Abram for God's holy purposes.

4. The paragraph from v. 4 to v. 8 should be noticed as God's representation of the part *He* has undertaken in the contract. As much as to say: "As for *Me*, My covenant is with thee, and being with thee the following benefits shall flow to thee therefrom:" such is the spirit of the whole paragraph. The one entire covenant of promise is spoken of; and therefore it is that the blessings go far beyond the future Hebrew nation. In fact, a multitude of nations are promised, spiritual fatherhood is embraced, all believers are included in the seed, and Abram—now renamed ABRAHAM—appears before us as heir of a blessed world. We are expressly sustained in saying this by the Apostle Paul (Rom. iv.). Hence we know that so far God is speaking of the one covenant of His grace given to Abraham; and as we find this covenant to be already in existence, we are confirmed in our previous conclusion that the covenant of the fifteenth chapter was no mere land covenant, but included every other Abrahamic blessing.

5. The next paragraph, beginning at v. 9, looks to the other side of the agreement. "But as FOR THEE, MY COVENANT shalt thou keep." Yet how could Abraham keep a covenant so Divine; so full of benefits to be bestowed rather than of conditions to be observed—benefits which only God could give? How could so vast a covenant be put into Abraham's hands to "keep?" The answer is plain: God will put His covenant—His one, all-comprehensive, already-existing covenant—into a sign, token, sensible representation, or memorial: and that sign Abraham and his descendants can keep, for it will be something which they can do and shall be charged to do; and in this way it will be something in the doing of which they can show their gratitude, obedience, and faithfulness. They will inevitably memorialise the covenant so long as they thoughtfully and intelligently observe the sign of it.

6. The sign given is circumcision. Let us not spare the pains needed for grasping firmly the relation of this sign of the covenant itself.

(*a*) It is an *expressive* sign, and as such is fitted to represent the whole Abrahamic covenant of promise. The small cutting round of circumcision represents the larger cutting up of sacrifice. The cutting off of a piece of skin suggests the cutting off of the whole old man. Circumcision is related, as a symbol, to self-denial, self-control, purity, consecration to God. In language unique and telling this rite proclaims that only under such self-renouncing conditions can the true development of the human race proceed. The all-sufficient testimony to the

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expressiveness of this sign consists in the significant way in which the Holy Scriptures attribute circumcision or the want of it (metaphorically) to the heart (Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4; ix. 26), to the lips (Ex. vi. 12, 30), and to the ears (Jer. vi. 10; compare Acts vii. 51). All this shows conclusively the fitness of circumcision to be a sign of the whole Abrahamic covenant of grace.

(*b*) Nevertheless it was only a sign of the covenant—it was not, strictly speaking, the covenant itself. A thing cannot be a sign of itself. If circumcision was appointed as a "sign" of the Abrahamic covenant, as we are told it was (verse 11), it could not itself *be* the covenant. It could indeed be *called* that; for nothing is more common than to call symbols of covenants by the name "covenant;" as for example the record of an agreement is called an "agreement." So the rainbow in the clouds was not the covenant made with Noah, but the sign of it. The heaps of stone piled up by Laban and Jacob were not the agreement between uncle and nephew, but "witnesses," that is signs of it. Had we the phrase "the covenant of the rainbow," that phrase would naturally mean, "the covenant about the earth and the seasons symbolised by the rainbow;" and in like manner the expression made use of by the "minister" Stephen, "the covenant of circumcision" (Acts vii. 8), naturally means "the covenant betokened by circumcision." There is nothing to show that the speaker intended the mere rite considered by itself. God gave Abraham the whole covenant of which circumcision was the symbol and the memorial. This is important, as showing the futility of the endeavour to make out *two* Abrahamic covenants partly by the force of the designation made use of by Stephen and preserved in the seventh of the Acts; as though the covenant with our patriarch "concerning Christ" (Gal. iii.) were one covenant, and "the covenant of circumcision" were another. The covenant of which circumcision was the sign is the covenant which has the Messiah as its centre. To Him the wounded flesh and streaming blood point; for His grace and power the demanded purity calls; to prepare for and bring forth Him the signed people are separated and summoned.

(*c*) Circumcision, being only a sign, *could* be treated with just the amount of freedom which was in fact used respecting it. Females were not excluded from the Abrahamic covenant; they were excluded only from receiving the sign of it. The Hebrew male children were under the Abrahamic covenant as truly if not as formally before as after the eighth day. Servants—both home-born and money-bought—could receive the rite; for, though they could not be certified to be Abraham's flesh when they were not, yet they could take their part in memorialising the covenant made with their master. Nay more! believing servants, like Eliezer of Damascus for instance, could be reminded by the very rite itself that although they had not their master's flesh yet they had his faith, by virtue of which they might share at least in the blessing of all nations, to say nothing of the minor and temporary benefits falling to their lot as dwellers within Israel's gates. Again, the neglect of circumcision did not necessarily entail death. The law here given merely says that the soul or person of the uncircumcised was severed from his kinsfolk. The covenant indeed was "made void;" i.e., either simply the sign was made of no effect when neglected; or if the sign were wilfully

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contemned, the covenant itself would be renounced; for certainly God has not promised to bless either the Abrahamic seed or all nations while guilty of wilful rebellion. Sacred history attests how sternly, upon occasion, circumcision could be insisted on (Ex. iv. 24-26); yet on the other hand how leniently the lapse of it might be treated under extenuating circumstances (Josh. v. 2-9). This diversity of dealing is explained by the simple consideration that circumcision, though attached to and expressive of the whole Abrahamic covenant, was in itself only a sign of that gracious compact.

(*d*) Circumcision was a *seal* as well as a sign. It was a "seal of the righteousness of the faith which he [Abraham] had yet being uncircumcised." Excellent! The righteousness which Abraham by faith attained is a sealed righteousness. Excellent, we say again. The seal was never broken. Abraham never renounced nor in any way lost his righteousness. The land—the seed—the grace—the blessing are safe. Abraham never forfeited them. With this we are content. It is loosely supposed that circumcision was a seal to everyone who received it. Not in evidence! It is even positively said that circumcision was the seal of the land covenant. Again we say—not in evidence; and the distinction of a temporary "land covenant" from an eternal "Christ covenant" is without foundation. It is better to keep to what is written.

JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

Phil. i. 23.

ON the condition of the dead during the intermediate state, that is, from death to resurrection, there is a great variety of opinion among thoughtful, earnest men; all desirous to arrive at truth upon a question of which they feel the deep importance. Some think that man is truly and really dead throughout that whole state. Others, with many modifications of opinion, consider that he is throughout it truly and really alive.

There can be no doubt that this question is a most important one. No one at all acquainted with religious controversy can hold any other view. On every side it touches doctrines that have agitated the human mind. While, in our judgment, the view of our opponents affords scope and opportunity for a variety of doctrines generally condemned by the Churches of the Reformation; our view, if accepted, would at once and for ever render even the discussion of such questions impossible.

Our view is simply this. We suppose that when death takes place the believer truly and really ceases to exist, and continues thus until the voice of Christ calls him up from the grave. The spirit of life from God which had animated him animates him no more, but has gone back to its eternal source in God until the day of resurrection. That spirit was not the man himself, but that which gave life to the man. Without it the man is dead. He is not living in heaven, or in any place of living beings, whether you call it Paradise or hades. He is not living above this

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earth or within it. He has ceased to think, to feel, to hope, to love. All his thoughts have perished. Death has been to him a real power, blotting him for the while from the land of the living. He is dead, and buried, and gone back to his dust. He has become what he was before the Creator made him a living soul.

Our opponents' view is essentially opposed to this. We cannot state it so simply as ours because there are considerable varieties of opinion among them. According as they suppose man to be dual, i.e., composed of soul and body, or as they consider man as tripartite, i.e., composed of body, soul and spirit, according to each of these opinions they must vary in their definitions of the intermediate state. And again, they must do so according to their view as to where man is located in the intermediate state, whether with Christ in the highest heavens, or in Paradise, or in hades; which latter condition is by such supposed a condition of life. For these reasons we cannot give so simple a definition of their view as we can of ours.

There is, however, one main point on which they are essentially agreed among themselves and essentially opposed to us. The true man, however composed, whether improved or deteriorated by the change which they call death, whether in heaven or in some locality within this earth, the true and proper man, according to one and all of them, is not dead but is alive. His thoughts have not perished; they are only transferred with himself to some other scene. Death has not put an end, however temporary, to the believer's existence; it has only altered the place where it is spent. Man with them is not in the grave. His body is there, but the body is not the person, the man. The man, the true person, the being who here had thought, and felt, and hoped, and loved, is not dead. He is truly and really alive.

What, we ask, is their support for this view? When the Bible generally, as all allow, speaks of man as dead, why do they insist with one consent that he is not truly dead, but is truly alive? They must have some good resort for what appears, at first sight at least, to be a point blank contradiction of what is stated over and over again in God's Word.

Now we unhesitatingly affirm that in the whole of the Old Testament, from its beginning to its end, there is not *one* text which speaks of the dead as being alive. There are texts without number which speak the very opposite. There are many texts which point to resurrection as the period when they are to obtain life. We affirm that there is not throughout its whole extent, covering so long a space of time, composed by so many different writers, so much as one text which tells us that man in the state of death is, perfectly or imperfectly, alive. We are told that he has returned to his dust, that he knows nothing, that his thoughts have perished! This is the invariable language of the Old Testament. There are no other texts which even seem to speak a different language. We ask our opponents to give us one such. They cannot.

Now we unhesitatingly say that this teaching of the Old Testament ought to decide this question. The Scriptures of the Jewish Church are as truly God's Word as the Scriptures of the Christian Church. Of them it was that St. Paul has said that they are able to make the man of God

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perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 17). If, as no doubt is true, there are some subjects on which the Old Testament is not so full or so clear as the New, yet surely death, the wages of sin, is not one of these. If on this subject it speaks in one plain invariable tone, we ought to accept its testimony as final. We ought to accept its teaching as explanatory of what we find in the New.

But our opponents are not satisfied with this. They pass over the whole of the Old Testament as though there were no such book in existence. They ignore its numerous plain statements. If they refer to it they disparage it as obscure, imperfect, unsatisfactory. They make their appeal to the New Testament, and will admit of no other. Even here, we hesitate not to say, they have very little even apparent support.

The New Testament certainly in its general teaching here agrees with the Old. Sleep is the condition which it affirms of the departed, just as much as the Old Testament does. Our Lord tells us that His friend Lazarus was asleep during death. St. Luke tells us that when Stephen died he fell asleep. St Paul affirms of all departed believers that they sleep in Jesus, awaiting the resurrection (John xi. 11; Acts vii. 6; 1 Thess. i. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Matt. xxvii. 52). It is universally affirmed of them that in death they repose in the grave, not in heaven. There is no hint that the grave contains only what might be compared to a worn-out garment, a fallen tent, a ruined house; but it is affirmed plainly and without reserve, that the grave contains the person, the man himself. Of all the departed, our Lord teaches us that "they are in their graves." The angel tells the women on the morning of resurrection to behold the tomb as the place where they "laid Christ." St. Luke, in the Book of Acts, tells us that the dead body which devout men carried to burial, was Stephen himself (John v. 28; Mark xvi. 6; Acts viii. 2). St. Paul affirms that without resurrection "the dead in Christ would have perished" (1 Cor. xv. 18).

Now what does this general teaching of the New Testament teach us? One thing it shows us beyond any doubt, that it means to teach us the same doctrine of death as the Old Testament did. And another thing we may surely say, viz., that, when we affirm that in death man sleeps, and is in the grave, we say nothing but what the New Testament, in its general teaching, affirms. Have we not a full and perfect right to abide by the general teaching of the New Testament? Is not its general teaching our best guide to the interpretation of any few passages which may at first sight appear to teach an opposite view?

Man cannot, all will allow, be truly and really in two places, or in two opposite conditions in one and the same time. He cannot, for instance, be in heaven, in the presence of Christ, and also be in the grave at the same time. We must make a choice between these two. If the true and real person be in heaven, we cannot suppose that the true and real person is at the same time in the grave or hades, and *vice versa*. And, if this be the case, is it not the reasonable rule of interpretation that we take a hundred texts which describe man as, when dead, in his grave, to explain some three or four which, taken by themselves, might seem to locate him elsewhere. These latter texts are easily counted. They are Luke xviii. 22; xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. v. 6; Phil. i. 23. We challenge our opponents to produce a single additional one. Are these

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four texts to contradict a testimony otherwise invariable, or to be the key to the true interpretation of hundreds of passages which, without these, would have borne an opposite meaning? In our opinion the opposite should be the rule. The invariable teaching of the Old Testament, corroborated by, at least, the general teaching of the New, should rule with an absolute power the interpretation of the half dozen texts which are so often brought up upon this important question.

Now, of all these texts, that of Phil. i. 23 is generally felt and acknowledged to be the strongest in its apparent opposition to our view. It has always appeared to us as being such. The apostle says that he is in a strait between two things. One of them was "to depart, and to be with Christ," which he felt to be much better, so far as his own personal wishes were concerned. The other was "to abide in the flesh," which he considered to be "more needful" for the well-being of the Philippian Church.

Now with respect to this text, I freely confess that I do not differ in any way from the interpretation usually put upon it even by the opponents of my view. I consider that by departing, the apostle means, not as some upon our side would have it signify the return of the Lord, but his own death. The other expression, "being with Christ," can, of course, have but one meaning. It must mean, as the like phrase means wherever else it occurs, being in person with our Lord where He has been and now is since He ascended up to heaven to His Father's right hand (John xiv. 3; xvii. 24; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Acts iii. 21). From this interpretation of the passage, our opponents argue that, during the state called death, believers must be, and are, in a conscious living state; because the apostle speaks as though there were no interval between departing, i.e., dying, and being with Christ. They take it as an indisputable thing, and for our part we freely agree with them, that "being with Christ" where He now is, is absolutely inconsistent with the idea that those who are with Him are dead. They must needs be alive. But in order to see what inference is to be drawn from the text, we must examine it closely, and look at it on every side.

Now in considering the force of this phrase, "being with Christ," we must rigorously confine it to its meaning. We cannot allow our opponents to affix, at their pleasure and for the convenience of their theory, any other meaning than the words properly bear. "To depart and to be with Christ," for instance, cannot signify merely to die and to be alive. The being alive may be properly inferred from being with Christ, but it cannot be accepted as the full meaning of the phrase. Neither, again, can "being with Christ" signify being in hades, even though part of hades may be supposed by our opponents to be Paradise, or Abraham's bosom. This is a favourite refuge for those of them who, with a little clearness, see the ugly position in which they are placed by accepting the phrase "being with Christ" in its plain obvious meaning. Faber, in his work entitled "The Many Mansions," is an example of this, when he says: "thus, *in some sense*, to be in the Paradise of hades is to be with Christ, though the human soul of Christ quitted it in the day of His resurrection" (2nd Ed. 353). But we cannot allow Mr. Faber, or any one else, thus conveniently to alter the sense of words. Whatever we mean by hades, Christ has left it, and is not there now. Being with

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Christ, cannot, therefore, mean being in hades. It means a state and a condition different from, and higher far than this. What it does mean we will now proceed to inquire.

Being with Christ, then, according to the natural force of the words, and according to what is expressly stated of them in other places where this phrase occurs, not only signifies that they are then alive, but it also signifies a great deal more. It signifies that they are in the immediate presence and company of Christ, and that they see Him as He is: it signifies that they are at God's right hand, for it is there that their Saviour is: it signifies that they are in a state of glory, and have obtained the full reward of their faith and patience. All this is necessarily included in the phrase, "being with Christ." All this, and not some lesser minor meaning, we must take as the meaning of the word, and from this full meaning draw our inference, whatever that inference is to be. And all this, let us remember, is asserted to be the condition of all believers during the entire state of death up to resurrection. That we are not putting an overstrained sense upon the words, will be seen from a few quotations which we will now make from writers who differ wholly from our view.

That the intermediate state is not a state of death, but a state of life for the redeemed, lies, of course, at the foundation of all the great things which are affirmed of this condition. To teach this is one of the grand avowed objects of Spiritualism, which, on this phase of the question, differs in no material respect from the ordinary view of the great majority of professing Christians. Thus, in a Spiritualist paper, "The Medium," March 22, 1872, one of the departed is made to speak thus at a seance: "I have only been in the spirit-world a short time. Ever since my entrance I have had a strong yearning desire to send a word of comfort to my bereaved husband, *to assure him that death is life;* that I still live. *It was not I whom he buried; only my form.*"

What the deluded Spiritualist utters in those dark scenes where men pretend to hold intercourse with the dead, the Christian poet sings in his immortal verse. Speaking of the departed, Tennyson says:

> "*They do not die*
> Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
> Nor change to us, although they change;
> Rapt from the fickle and the frail
> With gather'd power, yet the same,
> Pierces the keen seraphic flame
> From orb to orb, from veil to veil."—*In Memoriam.*

What the Spiritualist and the poet teach, John Wesley repeats in his vigorous prose. "What am I?" he asks. "Unquestionably I am something distinct from my body. It seems evident that my body is not necessarily included therein. For when my body dies, *I shall not die;* I shall exist as really as I did before" (Sermons cxiv). And so Dr. Candlish teaches: "Death," he says, "in this view is not really death; it is a step in the march of that life which knows no end" ("The Millennial Kingdom." By Rev. A. Brown, p. 67).

It would follow, as a matter of course, that those who teach thus that the departed are truly living, should also insist as a necessary inference that they are not really buried at all. The speech of the Spiritualist

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medium already quoted, "It was not I whom he buried, only my form," is often repeated. The Apocryphal work entitled, "The Consummation of Thomas the Apostle," only expresses the sentiment of hundreds of writers who call themselves orthodox. He thus describes his martyrdom, burial, and subsequent vision to two Christians who visited the tomb: "And when Thomas had prayed, he said to the soldiers: come and finish the work of him that sent you. And the four struck him at once, and killed him. And all the brethren wept, and wrapped him up in beautiful shawls, and many linen cloths, and laid him in the tomb in which of old the kings used to be buried. And Syphor and Juzanes did not go to the city, but spent the whole day there, and waited during the night. And Thomas appeared to them and said: *I am not there;* why do you sit watching? For I have gone up, and received the things I hoped for."

But the common view of the intermediate state, founded upon the opinion that "being with Christ," in Phil. i. 23, speaks of the condition of death goes, and must needs go much farther than supposing them to be alive; and, therefore, not in their graves. It describes them as seeing Christ and being with Him in heaven. With this sentiment, the hymn-books in most common use are thoroughly saturated, and, we hesitate not to say, are poisoned. Thus, one of the most beautiful hymns in "Hymns Ancient and Modern," 2nd Edition, No. 262, describes the yet future condition of the redeemed as already enjoyed by them:

"How bright those glorious spirits shine,
Whence all their white array?
How came they to the blissful seats
Of everlasting day?

Now with triumphal palms they stand
Before the throne on high,
And serve the God they love amidst
The glories of the sky."

Another hymn from this collection, No. 323, describes the believer as seeing the face of God during his state of death:

"Jerusalem on high
My song and city is;
My home whene'er I die,
The centre of my bliss:
O happy place!
When shall I be
My God with Thee,
To see Thy face?"

Considering the condition of death to be such, it follows, as a matter of course, that the dead attain in it an amount of knowledge far exceeding that of the most learned upon the earth. These latter are, in fact, but children to those who have, in popular estimation, passed into the true world of life and knowledge. Tennyson thus speaks of his lost friend:

"The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain fresh
All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times."—*In Memoriam*, lxxxv.

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Speaking of a dead child, Mrs. Browning says:

"She has seen the mystery hid
Under Pharaoh's pyramid."

Victor Hugo, in his speech over the grave of Madame Paul Meurice, says, . . . "Life is a problem; death is the solution."

II.

Of those who are not in the grave but are alive, who see God and Christ in heaven, and rejoice in a knowledge that would to us appear unlimited, the upholders of the ordinary view of death also affirm that they have during it obtained the reward of their faith and patience while upon the earth, and have entered upon their condition of glory.

The condition of the saints when raised in glory, as depicted in various parts of Scripture, is in no way superior to that which is affirmed of believers in the state of death in the following hymn; which would, indeed, be a grand and true description of the resurrection state, but is a most false account of the state of death:

"Hark! the sound of holy voices
Chanting at the crystal sea,
Alleluia, alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord to Thee!
Multitude, which none can number,
Like the stars in glory stands,
Clothed in white apparel, holding
Palms of victory in their hands.

Now they reign in heavenly glory,
Now they walk in golden light,
Now they drink, as from a river,
Holy bliss and infinite;
Love and bliss they taste for ever,
And all truth and knowledge see
In the Beatific vision
Of the blessed Trinity."

Hymns Ancient and Modern, 2nd Ed. No. 378.

In another of its hymns, the same collection describes the condition of departed believers similarly, and introduces—very naturally, and most properly from their view—the idea of the intercession of heavenly saints for those on earth:

"Made co-heirs with Christ in glory,
His celestial bliss they share;
May they now before Him bending
Help us onward by their prayer."—No. 379.

Another of these hymns speaks thus of the dead:

"Who are these like stars appearing,
These before God's throne who stand?
Each a golden crown is wearing,
Who are all this glorious band?
Alleluia, hark, they sing,
Praising loud their heavenly King."—No. 255.

Charles Wesley, in his hymns, is not behind the collection known as "Hymns Ancient and Modern," and in such extensive use in the Church

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of England. Indeed he sometimes seems to go beyond the strongest of their statements. In the following, he seems to teach that the resurrection, of which St. Paul speaks in 1 Cor. xv., takes place during the state of death. Speaking of the dead, he says:

"Subject then to no decay,
Heavenly bodies they put on,
Swifter than the lightning's ray,
And brighter than the sun."—No. 721.

And of the glory of death, he thus speaks in another of his hymns:

Our friend is restored
To the joy of his Lord,
With triumph departs,
But speaks by his death to our echoing hearts:
Follow after, he cries,
As he mounts to the skies,
Follow after your friend,
To the blissful enjoyments that never shall end."—No. 732.

The Apocryphal "Acts of Philip," speaks in exact conformity with these hymns. After describing the death of the apostle, it tells us that, "There was straightway a voice out of the heavens: Philip the apostle has been crowned with an incorruptible crown by Jesus Christ, the Judge of the contest."

We have thus seen, both from the natural force of the expression "to be with Christ," and from the general consent of our opponents, that the idea that the departed "are with the Lord" in the intermediate state signifies that they then see God and His Son, and are with the angels in heaven, and are possessed of an amount of knowledge altogether beyond what they were possessed of here, and have received the reward of their faith and obedience in the earthly life, and are crowned with the crown of life, and are placed in the state of glory; let us now proceed as briefly as we can to see whether such a description of believers in the intermediate state is at all compatible with what Scripture teaches; not in one or two passages, but in numerous passages everywhere found throughout its pages.

And here perhaps it will be well to note, before our examination of Scripture, that this glorious view of the believer in the intermediate state which we have spoken of, and which must needs be true if, in that state, they are "with Christ," is utterly rejected as unscriptural and untrue by very many writers of the highest character, and who do not by any means agree with us in our view of the unconscious state of the dead. Many of those who are commonly called "orthodox" reject, just as much as we, the idea of the dead conveyed by the expression "being with Christ." While they hold that the departed are in a condition of life, they reject the idea of the glory of that condition.

It is quite plain that at the very basis of this view of the condition of the departed must lie the belief that they are with Christ where He now is, i.e., *in heaven*. Without now examining into the opinions of modern divines, many of whom, possessed of the highest authority, we could quote as of our opinion, let us see what view was taken generally in the early Church of the opinion that the departed were, during the intermediate state, in a glorious condition and in heaven.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

(*To be continued.*)

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WHO ARE "THE SEALED" ONES?

I HAVE been much pained by Mr. N. Starkey's paper in the February issue of the RAINBOW on the sealing of the 144,000 (Rev. vii., xiv). I have followed him with interest and profit in his different papers, and feel thankful for the measure of truth which he has been enabled to give us through your paper. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is the advice (not to say command) which I endeavour to follow, weighing each doubtful sentence in the balance of the sanctuary, and accepting or rejecting accordingly.

That glorious Book of Revelation has been a study of mine for nearly thirty years, and during that time I have gone through a good deal of the literature of the different schools on its teachings. I have also been privileged for some twenty years to speak frequently in public on its precious themes.

In the first place, I am surprised that Mr. Starkey contradicts himself. In the January number he says, in proof that he is a Futurist, "I contend that the vision shown to John in Patmos, as recorded in Rev. iv. and v., has not yet been fulfilled, that the tenth verse of chapter v. shows it to be post-resurrection and pre-millennial; that the elders are seen sitting clothed and crowned, but have not yet begun their reign on earth. Therefore, the book is still untaken, and hence not one of its seals yet broken." Now to all this I say, as a Futurist, Amen! (though allowing the Preterist view *may be so far* a correct one, when used typically.)

But in the paper of February, after quoting three or four passages from Paul's Epistles to the Churches, he says, "Only in the light of these Scriptures (and *such as these* I take him to mean) can we understand who are the tribes of the children of Israel in Rev. vii. 4." Here our difference of thought commences. To a Futurist what possible connection can these quotations from the Epistles have with chaps. iv. v. or vii. of Revelation? I can see how they suit the Preterist when so used, but Mr. S. has puzzled me much by so using them as a Futurist. I had always thought that those to and of whom the apostle wrote in the passages quoted, would be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, as Jesus promised in Luke xxi. 36 (at least all found watching unto prayer, and, therefore, worthy), before the facts of the seventh chapter of Revelation come into view at all, or even the matters of the fourth and fifth chapters; and I shall fall back upon our brother's own quotations from these chapters in proof of it. I think, as believers in conditional immortality, we are shut up to the conclusion that the Church and body of Christ are still *upon* the earth, or *under it*; part awake, part asleep, but all waiting till He shall fulfil to us His exceeding great and precious promise, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." And 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, gives us the details of this *removal* and *reception*. But after this, where is she to whom the promise was made? Yes, where but with Him who said, "That where I am there ye may be also;" or, as in John xvii. 24, where the same yearning over us, as the objects of His love, is expressed to the Father Himself: "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me *be with me where I am*, that they may behold My glory."

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And now in Rev. iv., what is the first thing introduced to us, after the Lord and His glorious throne? Is it not the Church? Earth's lost ones, but God's gathered out ones; now gathered up also into His own presence, and glorified with the Promiser seated on thrones wearing crowns. And in v. 9, 10, chanting the praises of Him who brought them there, and yet expecting more; for they say, "We shall reign on the earth." *Pre*-millennial this must be; *post*-resurrection it also must be; because only through resurrection, or its equivalent (and promised) change, could they have come there. For they were all mortal. But, "Because I live ye shall live also," has been verified to them, and now, Rev. iv. 4, is reached. Behold He, the Promiser, and they to whom the promise and for whom the prayer were made, have received the former, and the Father's full answer to the latter, and are with Him, *alive for evermore*. Oh, what an ecstatic moment! How will it cause us to forget all the sorrows of the way through which it has been reached!

Mr. Starkey says: "The book of chapter v. has not been taken, and hence not one of its seals yet broken." True, brother; for when that is done, you and I must be there to see it, and to rejoice over its being done (if found worthy) (Luke xxi. 36). Why, it is the taking of the book, seen by the assembled and glorified Church, which gives rise to her song. For she sings, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof;" and then assigns the reason, "For Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." Yes, His loved ones must be there, and share with Him His glory, when He opens the title-deeds and claims the inheritance.

But where in any of his Epistles does Paul, or indeed any of the apostles, speak of the present gathering, Church, or body of Christ as being tribal in form, character, or manifestation? I know of no such passages, and Mr. Starkey's quotations, upon which he makes so much to depend, saying, "*Only* in the light of these New Testament Scriptures *can* we understand who are the tribes of the children of Israel in Rev. vii. 4" (the italics are mine) prove to me the very opposite, viz., that they who previously had a tribal character and position, lose it at once by receiving and putting on Christ. For "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28). To my mind this passage is fatal to our brother's theory. But he quotes another passage which I think is equally so; it is Acts xv. 14-16. "How God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name;" and, "After this" (more literally, *these things*) "I will return and build again the tabernacle of David." Mr. Starkey says after this age. True, it will be after this age, but is that the point referred to in the context? Surely not; but has more direct reference to God's work during the age than to the age itself, and tells us emphatically why He has visited the Gentiles; even to take out of *them* a people for His Name; not to the exclusion of the Jew individually, certainly; but the moment the Jew, *as such*, comes on to the foundation, Christ (as Mr. Starkey very truly, but inconsistently with his other arguments, says) he loses his former relationship and becomes a Christian.

As the past was emphatically the Jewish age, notwithstanding a few

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proselytes from the Gentiles, so is the present as emphatically the Gentile age, notwithstanding the few thousands of Jews connected with them. And, therefore, we read, "To take out of them" (the Gentiles) "a people for His Name." Now the people so *taken out* are also to be *taken up* before the fearful ordeal of judgment break upon the world.

The *beginning* of these things they *may*, nay, they *will* see. This I am led to be sure of from our Lord's words, as in Luke xxi. 28, where He says, "When ye see all these things *begin* to come to pass." (What things, if not those just narrated by Him in verses 25-27?) "Then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh," and in immediate connection shows who shall be so delivered (See verse 36).

But to see the *beginning*, and the *beginning only*, of these terrible things will be the portion of those counted worthy to escape, who follow His counsel, and are found watching unto prayer in the midst of a worldly Church, and a distracted world, calmly and patiently looking for their *blessed hope* (Titus ii. 13). And how very near may this be? Do we not see these very words of Jesus: "Distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear?" Do we not see Paul's prophecy before our eyes (2 Tim. iii. 1-5; iv. 3-4) as to the present position and character of the Church? Do we not see her Laodicean state as depicted in Rev. iii. 14-17? Who will say in the face of these Scriptures and our present surroundings, "The Lord delayeth His coming." The escaping of the faithful will also be the rejection of all else for the time being.

The age is closed when the Church is gone. We next see her in Rev. iv. in the heavenlies. How Mr. Starkey sees the 144,000 of chap. vii. to have any part in the immediate glory of the Church I cannot conceive. He takes a preterist view of the chapter, and spiritualises or explains away the whole matter. This certainly is what he has done. Why do we require passages from Paul's epistles to throw light on the tribes of the children of Israel mentioned in Rev. vii. 4? If the Word is only allowed to mean what it says, and to say what it means, Israel is Israel, and the tribes the distinctive tribes thereof, and never should be mixed up with the present gathering of the body and Church of Christ. Our brother seems to feel a difficulty here, when he asks objectors, "Where? when? how? as to time, space, or place, *could* such a work of evangelisation take place among literal Jews as to convert 144,000, and especially twelve thousand of each tribe?" That unhappy word *could* is clearly indicative of difficulty, and the words "especially twelve thousand of each tribe" also present evident thoughts of difficulty. But why should perplexity arise? Is the definiteness of number not a sufficient guide to show us it cannot be the Church in symbol, but must be the *literal* Jew? Taken to mean what it says, viz., that God will literally seal 144,000 of the twelve tribes of Israel preparatory to judgment about to be displayed around them, and for their preservation therefrom. There appears no difficulty, and a reference to Num. xxiii. 19, Isaiah xlvi. 11, or our Lord's own word in Mark x. 27, will help to strengthen us on this point.

Our brother may object to my use of the word literal, and say it is not in the passage. I admit it, but these words are in verse 4, "of all the tribes of the children of Israel," and I challenge proof where such

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language is once used as applicable to the present gathering or Church of Christ. I think these difficulties vanish at once if we allow Rev. vii. to stand as to time and place, where the author of the Word has put it. As one of the opening scenes of the coming age, a number of reasons, and, I think, incontrovertible ones, can be assigned in proof of this. First, the sealing in the forehead, taken as a literal fact, is seen in chap. ix. 4 to preserve certain persons from the judgments surrounding them, and which fall by special command upon those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. A different kind of sealing altogether, in my judgment, from the sealing of the Church in the present age, and one which ought never to be confounded with it. (See 2 Cor. i. 22, and Eph. i. 13.)

Again, our brother's ventured suggestion that the 144,000 of Rev. vii. 4 are not identical with the same number in Rev. xiv. 1, the former representing the bride on earth, militant, and incomplete; the latter, the bride triumphant, complete, and in heaven, with his added suggestion that the latter number *may mean* not thousand, but thousand thousands. The whole of these ventured suggestions I feel called upon to challenge as not being in harmony with the context, and to say I am sorry, for the truth's sake, they should have been ventured, feeling at the same time that our brother has done so with the best intention; but to alter the Word, or suggest an alteration without very sound reasons, is a very serious matter. I see the theory requires it, or something of the kind; but this only proves that the theory is wrong. Let the word be its own interpreter, and all is clear, plain, simple, and easily understood. The 144,000 are evidently the Jewish first fruit of the new age, which period is not entered upon till the removal of the Church, and, therefore, *cannot be the Church or Body of Christ* as Mr. Starkey thinks. The Psalmist even seems to have seen this prophetically (l. 3-6). First, the gathering of the Lord's saints to Himself, and then the age of judgment and righteousness. In the past age it was Jew and Gentile; but since the day of Pentecost it has been Jew, Gentile, and Church of God. The removal of the latter closes this Gentile age, and leaves again Jew and Gentile only, and the thread of Jewish history is united where it was broken, and by Him who broke it (Acts xv. 14-18; Rom. xi. 25-29). If our friend has still a difficulty as to the gathering out, *so early*, of so large a number of literal Israel to the Lord's side, I would remind him of the prophet who exclaimed, "I only am left;" but to whom the Lord replied, "I have 7,000 men you know nothing about," and, indeed, Paul's quotation of this in Rom. xi. seems almost to point to this very Scripture (Rev. vii. 4) when he speaks of an election of grace, especially verse 7. Out of the ten or twelve millions of Jews now existing, is it difficult to think of 144,000 being honest, God-serving, God-fearing persons, so far as they have attained to know, or been taught His will, not knowing or believing what we do, *and therefore not of the Church*, yet, like Cornelius, serving God according to their knowledge, and therefore at that time accepted and acknowledged of Him. The stiff, proud Jewish mind of Peter learned much that day he went down to the house of Cornelius (Acts x. 34, 35), where he exclaims, "Of a truth *I perceive* that God is no respecter of persons, but in *every nation* he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of

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Him." The 144,000 sealed in chap. vii. 4 are evidently preserved by this sealing from surrounding judgments while exposed to them, as in chap. ix. 4, and are now seen in chap. xiv. 1 on the Mount Sion with the Lamb, and said in verse 8 to be redeemed from among men and from the earth, being the *first fruit* unto God and to the Lamb (more literally, a first fruit). If these are first fruits there must be after fruit, or harvest; and how beautifully in keeping is the latter half of chap. vii. from verse 9, the harvest being "a great multitude, which no man can number," coming *out of the Great Tribulation*, from whence the first fruit had also come, as indicated clearly by chap. ix. 4. Some writers affirm this great multitude to be the Church; others (with whom Mr. Starkey evidently agrees) affirm the 144,000 to be the Church. But I hold that *neither* separately nor combined, symbolically nor otherwise, have they any part or place in the distinctive glory of the Church, but hold a place and partake of a glory peculiarly their own; and passing now to chap. xiv., we find it in perfect accord, for while in verse 4 we have the 144,000 first fruits, in verses 14, 15, 16, we have a *reaping* and *harvest*. Yes, a glorious harvest, which I look upon as the detailed gathering of the great multitude of chap. vii., and gathered chiefly, *if not exclusively*, from the dead. (See chap. xiii. 7-15; xiv. 12, 13.) Proofs for the foregoing affirmation I think are ample, and could easily be given.

T. J. HITCHCOCK.

Glasgow.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD CONSIDERED AS AN ARGUMENT FOR UNIVERSALISM.

TWO of our best known Scottish rivers—the Tweed and the Clyde—though running in opposite directions, have the same fountain head; and the contrary doctrines of eternal suffering, and universalism, in its various shades, have a common origin, and their existence depends on the same source, viz., the figment of the inherent immortality of mankind. Take that away, and they both crumble to pieces.

Nature and Revelation are silent on what is termed the immortality of the soul; and the Scriptures, in the plainest language, declare that immortality or deathlessness of being is only to be obtained through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That, so far are the unsaved from being deathless, their ultimate destiny, after judgment, is to "perish," to be consumed like chaff in the quenchless flame.

Very reasonably the question here presents itself: If such be the case, how is it that the belief of the deathless nature of all men has got so incorporated with the Christian religion, as it manifestly is? The question is an interesting one; and a very clear and able answer to it is to be found in the Rev. Henry Constable's work, "The Nature and Duration of Future Punishment," now in its fifth edition. To it the interested inquirer is referred; and, in the meantime, we would simply state that shortly after the death of the apostles their teaching began to be sadly corrupted by the incorporation of heathen philosophy, and in

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this way, by the end of the second century, the philosophy of Plato had become amalgamated with the doctrine of Christ.

The prevalence of the Platonic doctrine, thus introduced, is no doubt owing to the pleasing way in which it recommends itself to the pride of man; for is it not a grand thought to believe oneself to be inherently deathless as the eternal God Himself? Its success, at first, was no doubt also, in no small degree, due to the nursing it got in the Church of Rome, to which it has furnished profitable articles in the doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead.

From this heathen source sprang the awful dogma of eternal suffering as the punishment of all the unsaved. It first made its appearance, Mr. Constable informs us, about the close of the second century, in the writings of a nameless forger of the spurious works of Clement. It was advocated also by Athenagoras, Tatian, and Tertullian, its great and powerful champion.

Universalism was introduced by Origen, who died A.D. 253. The preaching of the horrid doctrine of eternal evil, and eternal pain, doubtless went far to aid the genius of Origen in promulgating his fascinating doctrine; yet it soon was treated as a heresy, and the powerful influence of Augustine well-nigh extinguished it for 1,200 years and more. In modern times, however, it has had a revival, and never had so many adherents as at the present time. For, though Universalists, as a sect, are, in Britain, comparatively insignificant, yet the doctrine is widely spread, and its advocates are gaining strength and courage daily.

From first to last Universalism is a recoil from the idea of never-ending woe. It is that doctrine, in combination with the idea of inherent immortality, which forms the stock argument of the Universal Restorationist. Very sparingly do these men draw their arguments from Scripture; and when they do, it is by explaining its terms in a secondary and metaphorical sense. They are, indeed, in the habit of treating with derision the quotation of what they term "strings of texts," and characterise the strict adherence to the grammatical and obvious sense of the words of the Bible, as "servile interpretation."

For the most part their arguments consist of moral reasonings and abstract considerations, founded on the character of God, &c; and one of these, on which they seem to place great reliance, is that with which we now propose to deal, viz.:—

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

Universalists of every variety use this argument with the greatest confidence. All men being children of God, it is held to be incredible that He will either destroy or eternally punish any of the human race. "A father," it is said, "who is wise and good, cannot even be imagined as putting to death one of his own children: much more, therefore, ought such an act to be disbelieved regarding the Father of spirits."

This argument, however plausible and specious, considered by itself, is far from sound. It assumes that, because God is the Creator, He therefore, sustains the relation of a Father to all men, and that it would be cruel in God to withdraw from man, for any reason, the life He has given.

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But why confine this argument to mankind? Man, notwithstanding the superiority of his powers, is no more truly a creature of God than is the meanest reptile that crawls on the ground; so that, were the argument sound, it stands as much against the final extinction of the life of any member of the animal tribes, as it does against the final destruction of wicked men.

> "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,
> And herb for the service of man.
> The eyes of all wait upon Him,
> And He gives them their meat in due season.
> He giveth them—they gather:
> He openeth His hand—they are filled with good:
> He hideth His face—they are troubled:
> He taketh away their breath—they die,
> And return to their dust" (Ps. civ., cxlv.).

Is God, therefore, cruel to the creatures of His care? If not, then how can it be cruel or unjust in God to withdraw from man the life imparted to him, should He see fit to do so; more especially if man by his conduct has forfeited all claim on the Divine favour?

But, confining the application of the argument to mankind, what becomes of its assumption in the light of facts and events constantly transpiring? What has it to say regarding those famines periodically occurring in the East, by which millions of men die of starvation? What man that is a father would allow his children to perish for want of food if he had it to give them? Yet the Almighty allows those famines and their consequences. What has the argument to say to the fact of those terrible earthquakes and volcanic eruptions by which thousands of the human race are sometimes destroyed in a few hours? The same question may be put regarding storms on land and sea, which annually bring death to thousands.

Then, think of those legalised murders, called wars, continually transpiring, where men butcher each other in open day, and answer the question—If the Creator sustains the same relation to mankind at large as we do to our children, why does He allow them thus, in His presence, to slaughter each other? What man among you that is a father would permit his children to kill each other, if he could prevent them? God does allow those things. Is He, therefore, cruel? None will shrink from the conclusion with greater horror than the Universalist. But what, then, becomes of his argument? It falls to the ground, and is utterly worthless.

The terrible and appalling facts referred to manifestly show that the relation which the Creator sustains to mankind at large is more that of a Ruler than of a Father. He has made man, and endowed him with extraordinary capabilities, and surrounded him with a world fitted to sustain him in happy existence; but himself, and the world around him are subject to law—inexorable law. Conformity with that law, in its physical and moral relations, brings life and happiness, but its violation insures misery and death.

Leaving what we term the world of nature, let us pass on to revelation, and try the argument in question by what we find there. What has this argument to say to the fact of our primogenitor, in the very

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dawn of his existence, being placed under law, and threatened with DEATH should he violate it? What has it to say to the destruction of almost the entire population of the world by the flood; the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah; the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea? What has it to say to the fact of the entire destruction in the wilderness of all the grown-up persons that left Egypt under Moses, except two? Will it charge God with cruelty in these cases? If not, where is its force against the idea that "ALL THE WICKED WILL HE DESTROY?"

We will now appeal to the direct teaching of the Christ and His apostles. The beloved Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father —to whom the Father had shown all things that He will do—came forth from the Father to make known His will and purposes toward man, and, in the most emphatic language, He gave the strongest denial to the idea that God, the Creator of all, sustains toward all men the relation of a Father; and that He will not destroy any of them because they are His children. Here is His language regarding certain men who claimed God for their Father—"If God were your Father ye would love Me. Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." What did he say was the ultimate doom of the children of the devil? These are His words—"The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; as, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world (or age). The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xiii. 38-42).

To the same effect is the doctrine of the holy apostles. "Children of God," "sons of God," are terms occurring frequently in their epistles, yet never applied to mankind at large, but contrariwise to those who have been separated from the mass to be unto God a holy and peculiar people. Thus, Paul reminds the Christians in the churches of Galatia that "they are all the children of God *by faith in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. iii. 26). Previous to their having that faith they, like their brethren at Ephesus, were "the children of wrath even as others;"—yea, "*by nature* the children of wrath" (Eph. ii. 3). "Behold," says the apostle John, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." "In this are the children of God made manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (verse 10). "The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil" (verse 8). The devil himself, and those of the human race who die in unbelief and impenitence, shall share his doom.

The same apostle describing his Master's mission and its result says—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him, *to them gave He power to become the sons of God*, even to them that believe in His name; who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

These testimonies plainly contradict the idea that to be a *man* is to be a child of God. As the work of His hands, men are the "offspring" of

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God; but, as formerly remarked, that is true of "all in whose nostrils is the breath of life" (Gen. vii. 22). God, speaking by His Son, and the apostles and prophets, calls only those His children who are His by *adoption*—who have been born again by faith in His incorruptible word. Not every man, but "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" (1 John v. 1).

Here is the grand secret of the Divine sonship: a being born again—born from above. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). Such is the Divine fiat. All born of woman, in order to becoming sons of God, must be *born again*—born from above.

Am I addressing one who has never reflected on the truth, that unless we are born twice we must die twice—that unless we are born of God we must die the second death?

These are serious words. Some may think them hard sayings, yet they are the true sayings of God, who loves you more than tongue can tell. He delights in mercy, waits to be gracious, entreats you to be His child; yet, as sure as He has spoken, "the day of salvation" shall have an end; and "there remaineth a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries." But why will you die, since God has sent His only begotten Son into into the world that you might live through Him?

W. Laing.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RESURRECTION.

Dear Sir,—My friend "G. J. v S.," whom I much respect and esteem, thinks I have fallen into an error in "overlooking the *different periods* of the first resurrection." He says also that the first resurrection is *manifestly* "*not a single event*, carried out in one moment, but a continuous one, terminating at a set time." I confess all this appears to me very extraordinary and very confusing. It may be my stupidity, but it seems to me that the expression, "*First* Resurrection" (Rev. xx. 5, 6), and "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection," conveys the notion that the resurrection spoken of was the *first*. Whereas it appears (upon what authority I know not, unless it be the dogmatic assertion of my worthy friend), that the resurrection of the Church of the present dispensation takes place some time before; and consequently, the resurrection of the Apocalypse is not the first, but the second, or probably the third of a series. Would "G. J. v S." kindly oblige me with some scriptural authority for the following assumptions, or as he confesses dogmatic assertions?

1. That the second advent of our Lord "is not a single event, but includes several distinct manifestations." That is to say, that there are two or three advents?

2. That the martyrs who rise from the dead as described by John (Rev. xx.), "are slain *after* the

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resurrection of the Church" and the rapture of the saints?

3. That the worthies of the Old Testament "are *not included* in the term, *dead in Christ.*" If so, how is it that the Old Testament saints, not being in Christ, can be saved at all, especially as both "G. J. v S." and myself maintain the doctrine of life only in Christ?

4. What Scriptural authority is there for the phrase *secret rapture*, since our blessed Lord has distinctly declared that His coming is like the lightning shining from one end of the heaven to the other, and that if they say, "Behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not" (Matt. xxiv. 26). Or is it feasible to suppose it can be secret and unknown, when the apostle (1 Thess. iv. 16) says, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a *shout*, with the *voice* of the archangel and with the *trump* of God?" It may be giving a little trouble to my friend "G. J. v. S." but a few direct Scripture proofs (not mere guesses) upon these points would greatly oblige me, and be interesting to the numerous readers of the *Rainbow*.

I remain, dear sir,
Yours very truly,
CHAS. UNDERHILL.
Woodbridge Lodge, Oxford.

REJOINDER.

DEAR SIR,—I solicit the privilege of a rejoinder to Mr. Starkey's reply to my questions of your previous issue.

Mr. Starkey would justify his statement that the Sealed Ones of Rev. vii. are representative of "The Bridegroom and Bride," by allusion to Rom. ix. 6, and Gal. vi. 16. The former is not to the point; and as to the latter, I am aware that Israel circumcised after the flesh is not the Israel of God; but if there were any *of that people* who were circumcised in heart, and gloried in the Cross according to the sentiments of "a new creature" (verse 15,) those were the Israel *of God*. It is evident from the wording of verse 16, that the term "Israel of God," does not apply to the "many" who were walking according to apostolic rule, but to a party as distinguished from them by the conjunction "and;" so that this passage affords no warrant for designating "*the Tribes* of Israel" as "The Bridegroom and Bride." Besides, it is manifestly inconsistent to apply an earthly title to a heavenly body.

At the close of Mr. Starkey's sequel in this month's RAINBOW, he wishes that the position of those who assail his, be placed side by side, that RAINBOW readers may be able to compare both with the Scriptures. This is just and good, I at once accede; and as I cannot quote the whole, I refer to my not long since published work on The Book of the Revelation, pp. 159-168, where my "position" with regard to the sixth seal and its results may be viewed side by side with Mr. Starkey's exposition on p. 71 of your issue for February.

It is the non-acknowledgment that the Symbols of the Apocalypse necessarily explain the nature of the phenomena with which they are connected, that leads to error of interpretation. If Mr. Starkey does not refer to my work, he will find the above principle of exposition fully narrated in RAINBOW for June, 1876, *et seq.*

Yours faithfully,
H. GOODWYN.
Reading.

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LITERATURE.

St. Paul's Man of Sin and Mystery of Lawlessness. A New Exposition of 2 Thess. ii. 1-12. By DIONYSIUS. London: A. Southey, Fenchurch Street.

THE writer of this pamphlet has keen insight into the workings and tendencies of that very unsteady thing called "public opinion." He thinks the rule of the lawless one will establish itself upon the democracy of the nations. Very likely; we have long thought so. Universal suffrage bearing the last of the world's Cæsars to his fatal throne, is no doubt part of the drama. But surely "Dionysius" cannot mean to teach—although his words suggest it—that nations should always recognise the principle of Divine authority in their kings, though those kings may be bloodthirsty tyrants and, morally, the vilest of mankind. Why, where would this lead us? What would be the position of England to-day if our ancestors had acted thus? A land of wretched slaves, instead of an imperial race!

NOTICES.

"A. B."—Yes, the "RAINBOW Tracts,"—a series of seven, by the Editor—may all be had now. We have gone to considerable expense in printing large editions, in the *belief* that they teach TRUTH, and in the *hope* that our friends will circulate them largely. The following are the titles and prices:—

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Friends wishing any of these tracts—they are, in fact, little books—for circulation, will please order them either of F. Southwell, 19, Paternoster Row, London; or Cyrus E. Brooks, The Link, Malvern.

"S."—We clip the following from the "*Christian World*":—"The sixteenth anniversary of Dr. Leask's pastorate in Maberly Chapel, Islington, was celebrated last Thursday. The reports of the various institutions connected with the church were all excellent. The only drawback was the want of room for the greatly-increased Sunday-school. The first report of the building fund was highly encouraging. The people are deeply in earnest in their desire to have a place of worship

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erected 'somewhat more worthy of the invaluable teaching with which the congregation are privileged,' as one gentleman said, who concluded his speech with a donation of one hundred guineas. It appears that Dr. Leask has received several sums towards the new chapel through the RAINBOW; and it must have been very gratifying to him to hear the encomiums passed upon that magazine, both by gentlemen from a distance, and by members of the church, as 'an advocate of pure Gospel truth, a powerful agent in the new Reformation.'"

"ISPAH."—You "can hardly credit the rumour." It is, nevertheless, a fact. Truth is strong and brave, and can afford to be charitable, so that we pity rather than condemn. The guardians of orthodox "errors and terrors" must be in a sad plight!

"A. G. S."—We can give you, in all sincerity, an apostolic answer: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am to be content."

"A. M. P." and "M. P." thank us for the sermon on "The End of all Evil,"—March No.—and add: "It clears up so satisfactorily the difficulty respecting pruning that the universalists contend for in Matt. xxv. 46. No words," says "A. M. P.," "can express the gratitude I feel to you for the light I receive through the RAINBOW." You ask the meaning of Matt. xi. 11. John was the greatest of the prophets (Luke vii. 27, 28) because he was the Lord's Herald, and had the honour of pointing Him out as *having* come, whilst the other prophets said that He *would* come. But in "the kingdom" the humblest ambassadors of the King will tell the nations of "the finished mystery of God," and demand instant allegiance to the Divine sceptre. John proclaimed "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," and was not believed by the influential ones; but the Saviour intimated, by the words under notice, that it should come nevertheless; and when its immortal preachers appear they will say, It *has* come in imposing glory! "Greater," not in personal character, but in the wonderfully altered circumstances. And poor desponding John would rejoice before the headsman's axe smote him, when his disciples told him what they had seen and heard, that, after all, dark as the outlook was, he was not deceived—not the herald of a false Messiah, or an imaginary kingdom!

"E. S.," Baldock, says: "I have been reperusing your interesting tract on 'The Rich Man and Lazarus,' and was gratified to find that the views I have lately received concerning the second death accord with those you have so clearly expressed in your pamphlet."

"R. W. B.," India, says: "Your explanation of the 'cloud of witnesses' is far more to the point than the common exposition. It strikes a fatal blow to the intermediate state, which is so cherished by so-called orthodoxy."

"J. G."—The word *gehenna* (hell) is not found in the Apocalypse. In the authorised version the word hell occurs four times, but in each instance it is *hades*—the realm of the dead.

"NEMO."—The Bible is our rule of faith, our authority, our creed. In another page you will find the judgment of the illustrious BAXTER on "Creeds." We commend it to your study.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

JUNE, 1881.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. V.

Annunciations and Prophecies. "The Highest," and "His Prophet."

A COMPARISON of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus brings out in a striking manner the solitary glory of the latter. Both were announced by the same heavenly messenger, both were out of the ordinary course of nature, and it is this very parallelism that brings into prominence the profound and eternal gulf that otherwise separates them. John was the child of Zacharias. "Elisabeth shall bear thee a son." The annunciation to Joseph was that Jesus was not a child of man. To Mary it was said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing (τὸ ἅγιον) (no parallel to it existing anywhere) which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." We come to see that the very circumstances in connection with the birth of John which seem to bring it near in significance to that of Christ, only remove the Lord's to an infinite distance in proportion as they are significant. For John's greatness is altogether due to his office, and the glories of his birth and of his ministry are solely derived from that Lord whose ways he went before to prepare. How great must be that Being, whose herald even must be provided in a way out of the ordinary course of nature, and filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb? But when He uttered his first cry in the wilderness world, the heavens were silent over Palestine; no portent blazed among the constellations, no strangely habited men came with offerings and with worship; indeed, the first to worship Jesus had been John, unborn (Luke i. 20, 41, 44). The news spread quietly, and no further than among a small company of "neighbours and cousins" who came to Elisabeth to rejoice with her.

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And when the tongue of Zacharias was loosed he speaks not the glories of his son, but of the "horn of salvation raised up for us in the house of His servant David." Gabriel had said to Mary, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," and of Jesus, "He shall be called the Son of the Highest," therefore Zacharias broke out, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways. To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins. Through the tender mercy of our God: whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us. To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Not a word is spoken of his Kingship, though indeed by Jordan's banks he ruled with a mightier power than kings'; and as he entered the world silently, so, his work being done, "in turning many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just," (grand life!) he quits the world as quietly as he entered it. To him, as unto Peter, an angel came in the recesses of his dungeon, but it was an angel in disguise, and as the head that would not bow to Herod fell beneath the sword, the chains fell off, the prison doors were opened, the wilderness was passed. Jesus testified, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." Consider then how great must He be "whose shoes' latchet" John said he was "unworthy to unloose."

John died a martyr to the truth he taught as much as Christ did, and if this were all in the death of Christ, it is strange that the apostles have no word to say of John's in all their doctrine. His death has no other significance than its example; the great something that was in Christ's death was not in his; no apostle preached it as a death for men, and for all we can see, the very record of it might have been spared were there not important lessons in the crime of Herod and his family, and in the withdrawal of the Forerunner—the dying of the morning star in the beams of the dayspring from on high.

Strikingly different is the testimony borne of Christ by those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and great the difference of the matter of the two annunciations. John's "greatness," as we have already said, is distinctly referable to his official relationship to Christ, "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord," "he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias." Of Jesus it was said (and the prescribed name of Saviour is momentous, "for He shall save His people from their sins"), "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever (or unto the ages), and of His kingdom there shall be no end." And if the glories of His birth made the dumb invisible to speak and to

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appear, the glories and meaning of His death and resurrection have awakened an unending song among the sons of men. When Jesus uttered "It is finished," then the song began, and the expiring breath of the Son of the Highest upon Calvary blew into a lasting flame the ardent love of His disciples—a flame that on the altar of men's hearts persists and grows, propagating itself through century after century, with a constancy and victory that confounds philosophy, and makes sport of every other faith and want of faith.

John's work was in the highest degree necessary. It was to prepare a people whose minds were imbued with simply carnal notions of the Messiah's kingdom for a Deliverer from evils and bondage of which they had a most inadequate conception. The redemption of man and of man's world must begin at the core of man's being—his spiritual nature. From the seat of his capacities as a worshipping child of God must proceed, as from the centre and energy of the whole, the renovation of his being and the restitution of all things. Hence Christ's first kingdom must needs be a spiritual and invisible one, and the work of the Forerunner must be a preparation of men's hearts. John in effect preached: "It is not subjection to Rome that you are suffering from. The independent kingdom you long after is not the kingdom you have lost. The oppressions you groan under are not your heaviest yokes. The contempt you endure is not your deepest degradation. Look within! look without! at your neighbours—he that hath no coat and no meat. Was it your unrighteousness towards him that gave you two coats and a full larder? If so, make restitution. You farmers of the revenue, stop your extortions! exact no more than is appointed you. You soldiers, who are regularly fed and clothed, and are in constant pay [good things that millions sigh for in vain in Christendom to-day!] dare not by violence and false accusation to add unto your wages. Oh, generation of vipers, ye do well to ask me, What shall we do? for the axe is now laid at the root of every one of you, and every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

Fear drove the listeners to their first good works, which worked themselves clear of the impurity of motive as they were continued. For in all obedience to the will of God, if it be only from the dread of God, there is an immediate reward, and what begins under a base constraint is repeated from a new affection, and is finally clung to as a principle of life, and connected inseparably with the love of God. Laws these of a spiritual kingdom owing their origin and energy to the "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." John the Baptist, in fact, introduced a new and brief dispensation—the dispensation of repentance towards God, which was to be succeeded by the present dispensation of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John's

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plough went up and down the hearts of men, uprooting their old notions of Israel's salvation, and begetting tears and cries and resolves in his hearers, which made them crane their necks heavenward for a healer of hearts, a forgiver of sins, a restorer of righteousness. Under his preaching mountains of pride were laid low, the depressions of the humble-minded were uplifted, the "crooked ways" of the worldly and the covetous were made straight. Jordan's rapid stream was stemmed by the multitudes that came to be baptized, and ere it reached the Sea of Death it was salted by the tears that fell. It was a dispensation unto life for those who got no further. Apollos was saved under it, but the brighter light was always the better, and Apollos was to see it before he died.

Water is a sign of the "faith" which "purifies," but fire is the far stronger symbol. "I indeed baptize you with water: but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." Thus did John prepare a highway for his Lord.

And Elias is to come again. Again, when the very opposite work will require to be done, but by the same kind of preaching, as a preparation for the Second Advent and the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. When men shall have made of Christ's religion, not a practical workday principle of righteousness and family life, all men being to one another as Father and children, but a thing for Sundays and the world to come. When the kingdom of God will be relegated to the region beyond death, and the idea of its practical exhibition in Time be derided as Utopian. When the salvation of men will have really come to mean the salvation of angels, and the notion of the human race being redeemed by the coming and sacrifice of Christ to a glorious life upon the very spot which has been drenched with their blood, their sufferings and their sin, be scouted and condemned as the carnal dreams of enthusiasts who lack the heavenly wisdom.

In those days—when the support of creeds and doctrines shall be made the vantage ground for the ostentatious display of piety and benevolence; when offerings to God, costly enough to make men gape, shall smell offensively of fraud and oppression—the future of saved humanity will still be thought of as mainly consisting of hymns and wings and clouds. To the Christian philosopher faith will grant a lute whereon to whistle throughout eternity, and to the Christian statesman will be accorded a pretty palm to wave up and down for ever and ever. All the heroes and martyrs will fill niches somewhere in the clouds, and formal ceremonial praise will not even be diversified by prayer. While these will be expectations entertained respecting the future of the privileged few, the great broad stream of humanity untouched, unblessed, un-

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redeemed by Christ, will continue to roll on its tragic course, suffering under all the ills of time, and under the manifold disabilities and injustices of a civilisation only varnished instead of interpenetrated with the principles of the Gospel. To such an age Elias shall come to preach the kingdom of heaven upon earth, to preach a material regeneration as a demonstration and result of a spiritual, to proclaim that the human race is not to end as a failure, a history reflecting an inscrutable shadow upon the character of God, in which the victories remain with Satan and the overthrows with Christ; the harvests with the Destroyer, and the gleanings with the Saviour; but that its triumphant and blest career as a lung-breathing species standing at the head of creation has yet to commence, and will start from the day when Christ shall sit upon the throne of David the Shepherd King; when, through the establishment of the sermon on the mount, as the law of His kingdom, government and politics and trade shall be entirely transformed, and wars shall cease. When, as a consequence, men shall be led into green pastures and beside still waters, while every year will see that kingdom broaden until the ends of the earth shall be knit together in the bonds of one fond fed family. But judgments must inaugurate this reign. Mary speaks of it in her inspired Psalm: "He hath shewed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

Israel will certainly be restored in that day. We see then the Forerunner in the first Advent had to uproot false carnal notions of an earthly kingdom, which it was not possible to establish in the glory of righteousness until a foundation had been laid for it in the regeneration of man's spiritual being: and this, which was the greatest, as it was the first work essential to the redemption of the world, was accomplished by Christ at His first coming, by His life and truth and sacrificial death. When also He won for man admittance to a world beyond the grave, to an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." But the conquest over sin and evil is not complete which appoints to human life sin, misery, and degradation, and only beyond the grave its path of honour, peace, and plenty. The history of humanity as a distinct department of creation, appointed a career upon this earth, would remain, we repeat, a dark and tragic failure, a reproach to its Creator, were it not destined to run through cycles of triumphant bliss under the reign of Christ and His saints, a period of honour and dignity and happiness to human beings, in the enjoyment of which the story of past degradation will appear as incredible, as we know it to be too true.

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It is this period, this kingship, this kingdom of heaven, when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, that Elias shall proclaim when preparing for the Advent of the King. The foundations laid in the truth and the faith which purifies, behold the day approaches when the lovely edifice of a society of men living together after the example and according to the laws, and under the Shepherd-rule of Christ shall arise to gladden the face of the universe of God. Then will an answer be given to the sneering question, "Can the maxims of Christianity become operative principles in the stern battle of life?" Then will be vindicated the creation and the career of the family of man, as age after age it continues to be a delightsome history, and the whole earth a garden of the Lord. And yet perfection will lie beyond, for the seeds of sin still lurk, and the Shepherd King is also ruler with a rod of iron. Another king still reigns, although with crippled power, man's life being lengthy as a trees'. The dayspring in those days shoots not high enough to kill that shadow, though it will deepen the peace of every "God's acre." But the perfect day succeeds when after the final struggle and subjection Satan and next the "last enemy," Death, shall be destroyed. Then, and then only, can God wipe away all tears from off all faces.

Bristol. HENRY DEACON.

A VISION OF THE MILLENNIUM.

THE groans of nature in this nether world,
Which heaven has heard for ages, have an end.
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath, comes.
Six thousand years of sorrow have well nigh
Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
Over a sinful world; and what remains
Of this tempestuous state of human things
Is merely as the working of a sea
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest:
For He, whose car the winds are, and the clouds
The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
When sin hath moved Him, and His wrath is hot,
Shall visit earth in mercy; shall descend
Propitious in its chariot paved with love:
And what his storms have blasted and defaced
For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair.
Sweet is the harp of prophecy; too sweet
Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch:
Nor can the wonders it records be sung
To meaner music, and not suffer loss.

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But when a poet, or when one like me,
Happy to rove among poetic flowers,
Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
Such is the impulse and the spur he feels,
To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,
That not to attempt it, arduous as he deems
The labour, were a task more arduous still.
O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance; and the land, once lean,
Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.
The various seasons woven into one,
And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion, and the libbard, and the bear
Graze with the fearless flocks; all bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now: the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
All creatures worship man, and all mankind
One Lord, one Father. Error has no place;
That creeping pestilence is driven away;
The breath of heaven has chased it. In the heart
No passion touches a discordant string,
But all is harmony and love. Disease
Is not: the pure and uncontaminate blood
Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.
One song employs all nations: and all cry,
"Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!"
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.
Behold the measure of the promise fill'd;

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See Salem built, the labour of a God!
Bright as a sun the sacred city shines;
All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
Flock to that light; the glory of all lands
Flows into her; unbounded is her joy,
And endless her increase. Thy rams are there,
Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar there;*
The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
And Saba's spicy groves, pay tribute there.
Praise is in all her gates: upon her walls,
And in her streets and in her spacious courts,
Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there
Kneels with the native of the farthest west;
And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand,
And worships. Her report has travell'd forth
Into all lands. From every clime they come
To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
O Sion! an assembly such as earth
Saw never, such as heaven stoops down to see.
Thus heavenward all things tend. For all were once
Perfect, and all must be at length restored.
So God has greatly purposed; who would else
In His dishonour'd works Himself endure
Dishonour, and be wronged without redress.
Haste, then, and wheel away a shatter'd world,
Ye slow-revolving seasons! we would see
(A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)
A world that does not dread and hate His laws,
And suffer for its crime; would learn how fair
The creature is that God pronounces good,
How pleasant in itself what pleases Him.
Here every drop of honey hides a sting;
Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flowers;
And e'en the joy that haply some poor heart
Derives from heaven, pure as the fountain is,
Is sullied in the stream, taking a taint
From touch of human lips, at best impure.
O for a world in principle as chaste
As this is gross and selfish! over which
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,
That govern all things here, shouldering aside
The meek and modest truth, and forcing her
To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men:

* Nebaioth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael, and progenitors of the Arabs, in the prophetic Scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large.

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Where violence shall never lift the sword,
Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,
Leaving the poor no remedy but tears:
Where he that fills an office shall esteem
The occasion it presents of doing good
More than the perquisite: where law shall speak
Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts
And equity; not jealous more to guard
A worthless form, than to decide aright:—
Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,
Nor smooth good breeding (supplemental grace)
With lean performance ape the work of love!
Come, then, and, added to Thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy! It was Thine
By ancient covenant ere nature's birth;
And Thou hast made it Thine by purchase since,
And overpaid its value with Thy blood.
Thy saints proclaim Thee King; and in their hearts
Thy title is engraven with a pen
Dipp'd in the fountain of eternal love.
Thy saints proclaim Thee King; and Thy delay
Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see
The dawn of Thy last advent, long desired,
Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
And flee for safety to the falling rocks.
The very spirit of the world is tired
Of its own taunting question, ask'd so long,
"Where is the promise of your Lord's approach?"
The infidel has shot his bolts away,
Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,
He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,
And aims them at the shield of truth again.
The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,
That hides divinity from mortal eyes;
And all the mysteries to faith proposed,
Insulted and traduced are cast aside,
As useless, to the moles and to the bats.
They now are deem'd the faithful, and are praised,
Who, constant only in rejecting Thee,
Deny Thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
And quit their office for their error's sake.
Blind, and in love with darkness! yet e'en these
Worthy, compared with sycophants, who kneel,
Thy name adoring, and then preach Thee man!
So fares Thy Church. But how Thy Church may fare
The world takes little thought. Who will may preach,
And what they will. All pastors are alike

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To wandering sheep, resolved to follow none.
Two gods divide them all—pleasure and gain:
For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
And in their service wage perpetual war
With conscience and with Thee. Lust in their hearts,
And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth
To prey upon each other: stubborn, fierce,
High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.
Thy prophets speak of such; and, noting down
The features of the last degenerate times,
Exhibit every lineament of these.
Come, then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
Due to Thy last and most effectual work,
Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of a world!

COWPER.

THINGS THAT PRECEDE "THE KINGDOM."

ONE of your correspondents expresses himself "perplexed and in a strait betwixt the Second Advent" as advocated in the RAINBOW, and our Lord's words in Matthew xxiv., Mark xiii., and Luke xxi., and is desirous of a "satisfactory explanation."

Perhaps there are few who have not experienced some difficulty in these chapters, and various interpretations have been offered. The difficulty is, that "Our Lord, by parable and otherwise, gives His disciples to understand that He would come in their lifetime, and also at the destruction of Jerusalem."

In considering the bearing of our Lord's words in these chapters, it is to be borne in mind that He is replying to the disciples' questions, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And what He had previously taught on these subjects would naturally give rise to such questions. If we, therefore, could only place ourselves exactly in the position of the disciples, knowing only what they knew, thinking their thoughts, cherishing their hopes, and experiencing the difficulties that perplexed them, we might perhaps be led to look upon our Lord's words in a different light; for their difficulties might be different from ours, and, in His reply, our Lord would, no doubt, in the first place have special regard to them.

As there can scarcely be a doubt that the disciples expected His "coming," and the "end of the age," not only in their lifetime, but almost immediately, two inquiries are important. On what were these expectations founded? And had our Lord's reply a tendency to confirm or to discourage them?

The faithful in Israel were "waiting for the kingdom of God" at the time that Jesus appeared. And no doubt the preaching of its

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coming, first by John, then by Jesus, had raised the expectation that it would soon appear. And this expectation seems to have been cherished by the disciples all along, up to the time at least of asking their questions. For very shortly before, when they were "nigh to Jerusalem," journeying thither we are told, "They thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke xix. 11).

Now in connection with this expectation they would naturally look for all those "glorious things" spoken of by the prophets concerning their city, their land, and their nation. And in His previous teaching Jesus had led them to look for their "reward," the "severing of the wicked from among the just," and the "righteous to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," at the time of His "coming" and "the end of the world" (Matt. xiii. and xvi.). But He purposely avoided telling them what was to befall Himself, and what calamities were to befall Jerusalem, until a very short time beforehand (Matt. xvi. 21-27; Luke ix. 22). He thus allowed time and opportunity for their faith to be established in Him, before breaking the sorrowful intelligence to them that He was to suffer, that they would be hated and persecuted after He left them, and that Jerusalem, instead of being made "a praise in the earth," should be "levelled with the ground."

"These things," said He, "I told you not at the beginning, because ye were not able to bear them, and because I was yet with you." He knew that they were cherishing hopes not then to be realised, that the things which were about to happen were the very opposite of what they were looking for. But it was only as regards the *time* that they were at fault. Their expectations as to the things they were looking for, were founded on the "sure word of prophecy," and our Lord's own teaching; and no word was uttered to shake their confidence in them. But after He began to tell them what was to happen, it is interesting and instructive to mark how, on the way to Jerusalem, by parables and otherwise, He sought to correct, and by degrees prepare them for being told of "all the things that were *first* to come to pass," and thus soften the feeling of disappointment consequent upon being made aware that their dearly cherished hopes should be indefinitely deferred.

Thus, on their way to Jerusalem we have the parable of "a certain man who made a great supper and bade many, and sent his servants at supper time to say, Come, for all things are now ready." But they, pleading excuses, all declined, so that the supper was *postponed* and other guests invited that his "house might be filled!" (Luke xiv. 16).

Again, we have the parable of a widow imploring a judge to "avenge her of her adversary." He would not *for a time*, but at last yielded. "And," said Jesus, "shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, *though he bear long* with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily" (Luke xviii.

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1-8). This parable we are told was spoken "that men ought always to pray and not faint." He had taught the disciples to pray "Thy kingdom come," and here he evidently teaches them to hold fast their faith and not faint, although their prayers might not be answered, nor their hopes realised so soon as they desired.

To the same effect is the parable in Luke xix. 12-27, "Because they thought that the kingdom should immediately appear, He said: A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." But it is only at his "return" that the "kingdom appears," and "the servants" are rewarded; and as in those days going to a *far* country would suggest a *long time* to *go* and to *return*, the parable was evidently intended to indicate longer delay than they thought of.

Still, as Jesus drew nearer to Jerusalem He was greeted with acclamations as their coming King, "Hosanna to the Son of David, that cometh in the name of the Lord," making it clear that they still thought the time had come for the "appearing of the kingdom." But alas! the "glorious things spoken of the city of God" were yet at a distance. He looked upon Jerusalem and wept over it, saying, "The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." And why was Jerusalem to be subjected to such a fate? The answer is, "Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke xix. 41-44). "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," He said again, "how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

These memorable words spake Jesus in the temple, and then went out; and we next find Him on the Mount of Olives, where the disciples asked him privately *when these things should be*, and what sign there would be of His coming and of the end of the world. The questions were natural. The things they had been looking for, and the things Jesus had been speaking of, were not in agreement. It was impossible that they could co-exist. The time of His "coming in His kingdom" is the time for Jerusalem, "the holy city," to "arise and shake herself from the dust" and her "bands from her neck," put on her "beautiful garments" and "forget the reproach of her widowhood." But here, Jerusalem is to be forsaken, made a desolation, and trodden in the dust. "When shall these things be?" asked the disciples. "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh," was the answer (Luke xxi. 20). Now here was an unmistakable "sign" of Jerusalem's speedy desola-

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tion, and no obscurity about it. But what time might elapse before the sign of desolation appeared? Of this they had no information. Neither was there said to be in connection with Jerusalem's desolation, any "sign" of the "coming of the Son of Man," or any hint given that He was then to come. No! That was not the time of which it is written "Saviours shall come up on Mount Zion, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's;" but, "these," said Jesus, "be the days of vengeance, that *all things* which are written may be fulfilled" (Obad. 21; Luke xxi. 20). "These days of vengeance" had been written of before, as well as the day when "On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said;" and all must be fulfilled in the proper time. But "the days of vengeance" precede the "day of deliverance." And how long might these days of vengeance continue? This could not be learned from any thing said in answer. The goodness of God was manifested as much in concealing "*how long*" the "desolation" would last as in giving assurance that it would be succeeded by a glorious future. To me, however, it appears that Jesus neither wished to leave the impression on their minds that His coming was *very near*—which might have caused disappointment afterwards—nor yet to make it appear certain that it must necessarily be at a *very great distance*, as that might cause their heart to faint. Nevertheless it may be observed that in continuing His reply He again used the parable of a "man travelling into a far country," leaving his servant, in trust, and represents that "*After a long time* the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them" (Luke xxv. 19). Hence, all through, our Lord's object seems to be to undeceive them in their expectations of immediate reward. The sorrows and sufferings inseparably associated with this "evil age" He gave them to understand would continue unmitigated. "Wars and rumours of wars, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes," were to continue until "the end." Instead of that "being the time when Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely," as expected by the disciples, He said, "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Now *all these things* were to be fulfilled; and fulfilled not only before His "coming," but before the "*signs*" of His coming should appear! "Signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and, on the earth, anguish of nations in embarrassment" (Luke xxi. 25). "These signs," Mark says, shall be in "those days after that tribulation." Matthew says, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days." And Luke says, "When these things *begin* to come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draweth nigh." This must mean when these signs that come after the "tribulation" *begin* to appear.

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It cannot mean when the wars and desolations spoken of should *begin*. For Jesus warned them not to be deceived during the time of wars and commotions, by false Christs and false prophets saying "*the time is near*," for, said He, "These things must *first* come to pass, but the end is not by and by."

If "the tribulation of those days" be understood to begin when Jerusalem was "compassed with armies," it nevertheless cannot surely be understood to have been at an end when Jerusalem was made desolate; nor to be at an end so long as Jerusalem is "trodden down of the Gentiles!" But, from the figure of the fig tree given afterwards and all that is said concerning the signs to follow the tribulation, we are led to expect that the appearing of the Son of Man will follow very shortly after the signs appear.

Thus far there seems nothing in our Lord's words to lead them to understand that He would come in their life time, and much against the idea that He would come at the destruction of Jerusalem. The great difficulty on this point, however, is in verse 34, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things shall be fulfilled." If this saying be understood to mean that all would be fulfilled during the lifetime of those then living, the statement seems wholly inexplicable. But "generation" does not necessarily mean men living simultaneously. "Its meanings are various," says Eadie, in his Biblical Cyclopœdia, "it is used to denote a particular *class of people; a period of time*," &c.

Bullinger gives "birth, race, descent, offspring;" and says, "*It denotes* an age or generation *from the point of view of race*."

Mr. J. B. Rotherham says, "When applied to a united body of men, its radical signification evidently is, *men united by birth:* whether the birth which unites be simultaneous birth from many parents, or birth repeated in a line from one parent, must be learned from context and circumstance." Again he says, "We sometimes apply our word generation to men living in succession. In such cases, perhaps, it will commonly be found that the birth is not literal, but metaphorical, justifying the observation of Cruden: 'Generation is taken for men of like quality and disposition, though neither of the same place nor age.'"

We are not then bound down to one particular application of this term, but are free to understand it in any of these meanings which the circumstances of the case may seem to demand. Let us therefore see whether context and circumstances throw any light upon the meaning of these words as used on the Mount. We have only to look back to what our Lord said when addressing the Scribes and Pharisees in the temple, to find Him using precisely the same expression, "This generation;" and that, too, when He was speaking of those very things which gave rise to their questions. If, therefore, we can ascertain in what sense He used the term in the Temple, it is surely fair to conclude that He would use it in the same sense when He repeated it on the Mount so shortly afterwards;

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especially if the sense be found to agree with the whole of the reply, and to have a bearing besides upon the questions to which the reply was given.

We ask attention then to the words of Jesus in the temple. "Wherefore ye be witnesses to (against) yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye *generation* of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, &c., that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the blood of righteous Abel, &c. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon *this generation*" (Matt. xxiii. 31).

Our Lord knew that those whom He thus addressed in the temple as "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," were watching an opportunity to kill Him, and thus "fill up the measure of their fathers," who "killed the prophets." But surely these men could not be held guilty of "the blood of Abel" or of "the prophets" who were killed long before they were born! Yet our Lord says, "All shall come upon this generation." "This generation" then must include all who had shed righteous blood from Cain downward. Now it is to be remembered that these Scribes and Pharisees claimed to be "Abraham's seed," and to "have one Father, even God;" and hence to be of "the generation of the righteous." Jesus, while admitting them to be the "seed of Abraham according to the flesh," and hence "his children" by literal descent, yet avers that they were the seed of and allied to a different race, a race or generation distinguished for shedding righteous blood. "Ye are of your father the Devil," He said, "and the works of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth." The root of the word "generation" has to do with the beginning of things, and here we are taught where to find the beginning of "this generation." That "old serpent which is the devil and Satan" is designated the father of the race, and fittingly his progeny is designated a "generation of vipers." Hence upon "this generation" all the "*righteous* blood" shed upon the earth is chargeable.

It is not unusual in Scripture to designate "a class" of "like quality" and disposition, whether distinguished by righteousness or wickedness, as a "generation," without regard to the time at which they live. An example or two may suffice. "They have corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of His children; they are a perverse and crooked *generation*" (Deut. xxxii. 5). "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a *generation*" (Ps. xxii. 30). "God is in the generation of the righteous" (Ps. xiv. 5). "Ye are a chosen generation" (1 Peter ii. 9). And as Mr. J. B. Rotherham remarks, "Is it not all too plain that of those *four* evil generations, or races, in existence in the days of Agur the

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son of Jakeh, not one of them has even yet passed away" (Prov. xxx. 11-14).

If the meaning of "this generation" here submitted be correct, it is easy to see the bearing of our Lord's words upon the disciples' questions. As the time approached that "He should be delivered up" He repeatedly told them that they should be persecuted and killed. "Some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city," He said to the "generation of vipers" addressed in the Temple, and doubtless to the same "generation" He referred in His reply on the Mount, "They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you." In all ages the cry of God's persecuted ones has been, "Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? They break in pieces Thy people, O Lord, and afflict Thine heritage." It shall not always be thus! "To you who are troubled," says Paul, "rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven taking vengeance." But as the "tares," choking the wheat in the field, are not gathered out—though the servants desired it—until harvest, so the "wicked are not to be severed from among the just to "pass away" like the bundles of tares in the fire, till the "end of the world." But, as taught by Jesus—when nearing Jerusalem—in the parable of the widow seeking to be avenged, "God, though he *bear long* will avenge His own elect, who cry day and night unto Him." Not, however, until "all those things" foretold by Jesus "shall be fulfilled," but when "the Son of Man is revealed," then shall "this generation pass away:" not in the sense of Solomon when he says, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh," but in the sense in which those who lived in the days of Noah (as Jesus illustrated His saying immediately after) when the flood came and took *them all away*. Or, as we have it in Psalm cxii., "The *generation* of the upright shall be blessed;" but "the wicked shall gnash with his teeth, and *melt away*." J. MILL.

Cupar.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument Against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. IV.

SECOND.—THE ARGUMENTATIVE PORTION OF THE REPLY.

"Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him."—Luke xx. 37, 38.

THE incident whence our Lord brings His argument appears in the book of Exodus, and is to the following effect: While Moses kept

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the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, in the wilderness or pasture lands of Sinai, he arrived at Horeb, called the mountain of God. There he saw a bush wrapt in flame, but, marvellous to tell, the fire did not consume its branches. In the midst of the burning there appeared to him, in vision, the Angel of the Lord; and when he had been commanded to put off his shoes, and to remain at a distance, a voice—it was the voice of God—said to him from the centre of the flames, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. iii. 6). The form of the Divine communication given at the bush varies, but the substantial agreement among the sacred writers is perfect. In Exodus, God speaks in person; Matthew says, "That which was spoken unto you," meaning, for your instruction; Mark is the same as Exodus; in the Apostle Peter's version (Acts vii. 31) we are told, "The voice of the Lord came unto him"—Moses—"saying, I am the God of thy fathers," &c. (verse 32); and Luke, as must have been noticed already, is slightly different, only in form, however; "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham," &c. All the accounts agree in this, that from the midst of the burning shrub God proclaimed Himself as being *then* the God of the three patriarchs. At the date of this supernatural occurrence, it is only necessary to remark further, the worthies had been long dead—in Sheol, the tranquil, sunless land—Abraham 329 years, Isaac 224, and Jacob 198.

The reason why Jesus drew His argument from Moses is obvious: the questioners had referred to the Lawgiver of their nation as furnishing authority for the marriages contracted by the woman with the seven brothers who had died in succession. By appealing to him in one case, they were in consistency bound to hear him on any other matter adverted to in his compositions. Thus the Lord met them on their own terms, and led them to compare their belief as to a resurrection with the Mosaic records, for which they tacitly acknowledged unlimited respect.

As this department is one of surpassing moment, we shall take the liberty of dividing our remarks into sections, the better to promote the ends of distinctness and easy reference.

1. Our Lord contradicts the Sadducees once more by declaring, though not in direct language, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were to be resurrected; and He affirms His antagonists might have discovered *that* as a matter of certainty from the words spoken at the bush, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. Taking the phrase, "the dead are raised," by itself, it apparently intimates that the event in controversy was past; but obviously this would be a serious mistake. Jesus has already guarded us against that misunderstanding, by placing the resurrection He taught in the future from the date of His address, verse 35, "they which *shall be* accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from (among) the dead," &c. This, of course, is the same event which is always represented to be a phenomenon awaiting its manifestation in after ages. Hymeneus and Philetus, in the primitive church, contended that the resurrection had already taken place, a doctrine the Apostle Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, pronounces a fatal error. Concerning the truth, he testifies by the Spirit, they had "erred, saying the resurrection is past already, and had overthrown the faith of some" (ii. 17, 18).

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The Sadducees well understood that, according to Christ's teaching, the resurrection was an event yet to transpire, and He confirms them in that view, as well as in their conception of what a resurrection must be, or must include, though they did not believe such an occurrence would ever happen. So that, all things considered, the words "are raised" are equal to this form, the dead are to be raised, or will be raised. Nor is it a strange mode of expression, but a figure of speech common to all languages, whereby the future is sometimes represented as the past, and sometimes as the present, of which we shall ere long have occasion to supply other examples from the Holy Scriptures.

2. The words spoken from the bush, and often repeated afterwards to the Hebrews, represent the Lord as being then the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The testimony is not, I was, but *I am*. True He was, or had been, their God, and during the spiritual period of their lives they were His servants, and favoured servants indeed, as their biographies abundantly attest. But the relationship between them had not been dissolved; He was still their God, even when they were held fast in the sleep of death.

3. Was that sleep to be eternal, as the Sadducees contended? No, says Jesus, the very fact that God declares Himself their God still, involves their resurrection; the relationship still enduring between them is tantamount to a prediction that He will sooner or later summon them back to conscious existence by a resurrection.

4. We have just said a resurrection will restore them "to conscious existence." But very many, we are aware, differ from us in that, and for the present we shall use the word "resurrection" indefinitely, letting it involve what it may.

Jesus, then, says, arguing from the relationship between God and the Patriarchs, they are, in virtue of its continuance, sure of a resurrection. In that all Christians are agreed. We may be able to demonstrate that it includes much more than is commonly imagined, and in reaching such a position are truly solicitous to advance by firm and honest steps in open day.

The Common Interpretation given to this Portion of the Reply.

5. Let us first examine the commonly accepted exposition, and the view it presents of our Lord's argument in favour of a resurrection.

Every person of even ordinary intelligence, on reading the two verses, will at once admit the reasoning is exceedingly condensed, and the expression of it seemingly elliptical, to a certain extent. As delivered, the argument was perhaps brought out at greater length than we find it in any of the reports. Even as it is recorded, Luke is more extended than Matthew and Mark. The following, we trust, will readily be accepted as a fair exhibition of the *popular* view of the passage, and the argument for a resurrection as thereby evolved:

"*Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham,*" *&c. He calls Himself their God, because they are alive in the unseen world, and "it is absurd," as Barnes puts it, "to say that God rules over those who are extinct or annihilated, but He is the God only of those who have existence." They are now, as when on earth, living for His glory, and because they are so, that fact in-*

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volves, and in effect predicts, the ultimate resurrection of their bodies as its concomitant result.

The commentator just named makes a general remark to the following purport:

"This passage (in Matthew) does not prove *directly* that the dead *body* will be raised, but only by consequence. It proves that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had an existence then, or that their souls were alive. This the Sadducees denied (Acts xxiii. 8). And this was the main point in dispute. If this was admitted, if there was a state of rewards and punishments, it would easily follow that the *bodies* of the dead would be raised."

6. After reading this passage from the *Notes*, let us suppose one earnestly inquiring into this great subject to submit a few questions to its author. The answers given, we cannot doubt, are substantially what would have been returned had the meeting been real and not imaginary. We have heard the same questions asked, and the identical replies delivered, by persons thoroughly acquainted with the long-accepted views. Thus, we imagine, the dialogue to proceed:

Inquirer—Not quite understanding your exposition of what was said at the interview between Jesus Christ and the Sadducees, may I respectfully beg of you an answer to a few questions, so as to assist my comprehension?

Commentator—With pleasure; and I hope the replies will enable you to understand the verses in the Gospel narrative more readily.

Inquirer—Well, I begin with this one—What is man?

Commentator—A being made up of two parts; a body and a soul.

Inquirer—Neither is a man?

Commentator—Neither; a man is a result, so to speak, from the union of the two.

Inquirer—As all of us do, I know what the body is, but inform me what is the soul.

Commentator—That I cannot define except in some such varied and amplified language as this: It is an essence; the seat of human intelligence and feeling; the basis of human personality; an invisible, immaterial entity, or principle, which can think even when disjoined from the body, and which, by its union with the organism, imparts life to it, or keeps it alive.

Inquirer—Is there not a distinct life-force belonging to the organism itself, apart from the soul-life, or life-giving power of the soul?

Commentator—There is, I presume, what is usually called animal life; but the union of the soul with the organism supports that life; insures its continued vitalizing energy.

Inquirer—In effect, then, soul in a body is its life?

Commentator—That, I think, is just about correct.

Inquirer—Now, please, tell me what is death.

Commentator—Breaking the tie between soul and body; the consequence of which is, the soul is set free into space, and the body returns to its kindred dust, or is resolved into its original elements.

Inquirer—Would you hesitate to say the body literally dies?

Commentator—Of course it dies literally; in other words, its animal life goes out, like a lamp, when the soul leaves, which lent its force to the bodily life. Then, whenever life is cut short, the corruptible organism begins to decay with more or less rapidity.

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Inquirer—So there is something literal in death; a *literal* rending of the tie between soul and body; a *literal* going out, ceasing to be, of the animal life; a *literal* decay of the organism in the grave?

Commentator—Terribly literal, I should say.

Inquirer—Now explain to me why the soul does not literally die at the same time.

Commentator—The soul, my friend, is immortal, deathless. The soul can say to the body, I can live without you, but you cannot live without me.

Inquirer—Man can die, but his soul cannot?

Commentator—Remember, man is the union of a soul and a body, and he can die, for the parts are separable; but the entity—the soul—is beyond the reach of death. It must live on for ever and ever.

Inquirer—Am I to understand you to affirm the soul cannot die because it is a soul; or, what amounts to the same thing, God must either make *immortal* souls or none?

Commentator—That, my fear is, would be limiting the Almighty.

Inquirer—Then you allow that God can regulate the life or duration of souls, as of anything else His creating energy produces?

Commentator—He regulates the duration of the life of His creatures after His own will.

Inquirer—Man's soul, you have said, is immortal; is the immortality inherent in the entity, or being, itself, and absolutely inextinguishable?

Commentator—That might be too strong language; but this I am prepared to uphold: when He resolved to create human souls, He decreed that each of them should be immortal, or be kept by Him perpetually in conscious existence.

Inquirer—Immortality, then, is not a property of souls as souls; and human souls are deathless merely because He has willed it to be so in their case?

Commentator—As a statement of my faith, I would accept that.

Inquirer—Nothing is to be fulfilled by man as a condition of immortality?

Commentator—Nothing whatever. Man's immortality is determined by the purpose of God, not by any quality, say moral or pious, in the soul itself; yet it must choose for itself the *kind* of immortality it is to spend—a happy one or miserable.

Inquirer—Permit me now to ask—What is a resurrection?

Commentator—A partial repetition of creation.

Inquirer—Oblige me by explaining that definition.

Commentator—The creation of a man involves *three* steps. First, the creation of a soul: second, the construction of an organism; and, third, the union of the two; the product is a human being. His resurrection is but the formation of a new body, or organism, and the conjunction with it of the soul, which had been displaced at death, or by death, from the first material organism.

Inquirer—And that is all the resurrection the "Prince of Life," as Jesus our Lord is styled, spoke of and argued for in the presence of His adversaries, and on innumerable other occasions?

Commentator—That is all. He contended, and proved to the Sadducees, "that the dead *body* would be raised"—to use my own words in the *Notes*.

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Inquirer—There is no revival, or restoration, of suspended consciousness?

Commentator—None is needed; the soul retains it consciousness in its disjoined or dis-tenanted state as perfectly as ever.

Inquirer—I think you employ words in your *Notes* indicating that a soul when separated from its body is still a person—still a man?

Commentator—I do so in the very page open before you, where you find these words, "All the righteous dead, of whom He can properly be called their God, live for His glory; and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had an existence then, or that their souls were alive."

Inquirer—But how can you speak of a portion of a man as the man himself?

Commentator—Because the soul is the all-important part; it alone involves, absorbs, as it were, the idea or conditions of personality. It alone is the man, and therefore, wherever a man's soul is, *he* is. The body is not the man, any more than the house is the inhabitant who dwells in it.

Inquirer—Do we not all say habitually, "the funeral of such a man," "the grave of such a man?"

Commentator—Merely because a man proper once lived in the poor tenement we commit to the dust. It is popular, not by any means accurate, language; describing the less by the incalculably greater, in virtue of the union that once subsisted between them.

Inquirer—Then, excuse me for repeating my question, the whole aim of the Son of God in reasoning with the Sadducees was to establish this, that there will be a recovery of some kind of material organism for the soul, by a supernatural process called resurrection? His argument relates essentially to the "less," not to the "incalculably greater," as you formerly expressed yourself?

Commentator—As I said on a previous occasion, I would accept that as a statement of my faith.

Inquirer—And the Bible justifies you in these positions?

Commentator—So I understand its announcements.

Remarks on the Common Interpretation.

7. As Mr. Barnes was but a man of like passions with ourselves, high as his place might be in the Christian church, having no claim to infallibility, we must not suppose that he was enthroned above error, and duty binds us therefore to question everything he propounds, that in the end we may become enriched with spiritual truth, which is the thought of God. He speaks in the name of what, for the sake of distinction, is usually called orthodoxy, though, of itself, we conscientiously affirm *that* neither excites our opposition nor wins our reverence. And in this free spirit we shall endeavour to estimate the value of his words, the soundness of his explanation. Great difficulties meet us at once in accepting what is held forth as the correct interpretation of the passage before us, and we shall note them without any reserve.

1st Objection.—When Mr. Barnes says that the living or the non-being of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob after death "was the *main point* in dispute," he falls into a serious and well-nigh inexcusable mistake. The

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interrogation of the Sadducees related not to consciousness beyond death. They did not say, Whose wife *is she now?* Their question had reference to social arrangements in the resurrection epoch: "In the resurrection whose wife is she," or shall she be? After answering their question authoritatively, Jesus next proceeds to argue for their benefit from the earliest Scriptures that there would be a resurrection; an infinitely more important matter, and concerning which they were avowedly in disbelief. If they had inquired about the state in which men existed during the intermediate period—their employments, affinities, exercises, delights or pains—that would have started the dispute which the author of the *Notes* supposes to have arisen; and they might have done so with equal sincerity, for they no more believed that men were alive when they were dead than that they would ever be restored to life. If the post-death existence had been the leading topic of discussion, we should naturally have expected the argument to have been introduced in this way: "Now that the dead are really alive," &c.; but this is the manner of commencement: "Now that *the dead are*,"—that is, will be—"raised," &c.; than which nothing could point out the subject in controversy with more distinctness. Why they did not trouble Him with a question of that nature seems *very plainly to indicate that on that point the "Master" was of one mind with themselves.* If He taught the reverse of their opinion, that, as Mr. Barnes upholds, the dead are still in conscious existence, the least we can say is, they had not heard of it; a most *improbable* circumstance. But they knew that He taught a literal resurrection, or the restoration to life of individual humanity, in the future sometime; and on that article they were eager to assail Him, hoping to bring His doctrine into ridicule before the crowd, and throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Though we believe Mr. Barnes misapprehends the question in dispute, and the drift of the Saviour's argument, he must be allowed to put his own case. He maintains that our Lord proved the Patriarchs were alive, and if that were admitted, he says there was clearly indicated a state of rewards and punishments towards which men were advancing; and such being the Divine arrangement, "it would easily follow that the bodies of the dead would be raised."

Now, we can suppose a Sadducee, even a candid and truth-loving member of the sect, if he understood that all our commentator affirms was included in, or followed from, the supposed demonstration of life after death, declaring that he could discern no necessary affinity between the reasoning and the doctrine founded upon it. There might be a life beyond death, and yet *not* a state of rewards and punishments. It might be, as many have conjectured, merely a prolongation of intelligent existence, ending, perhaps, in virtue of the new, and, as it might be supposed, more favourable disciplinary circumstances, in the beautifying even of the most depraved with all moral excellence, at a time however far onward from the date of their passage into the confines of the invisible and unknown. Moreover, there might be a life after death and yet *no* resurrection of the bodies of the dead. The reverend commentator holds these were included in the demonstration; but are they included? For ourselves, we pronounce it a gratuitous assumption. If Jesus proved that the dead are living after all, the dictate of wisdom is, *rest*

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satisfied with that information, and do not make it include other things, which it may be convenient to involve in it, when they are not there. This view of our Lord's reasoning makes it even already utterly inefficient to silence and confound His adversaries. It represents His argument as nothing better than smoke discharged at their creed, instead of an iron bolt to shatter it in pieces.

2nd Objection.—Here is another difficulty. There was proof given, according to Mr. Barnes, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were still in existence, though dead, which he explains and qualifies by adding, "*their souls* were alive." Now this is all very well so long as the commentator's ideas about what a soul is are accepted as true; but its aspect is changed the moment we demand, Are his notions on that point correspondent with Scripture? To such a test they must come. What the Bible doctrine of soul is, ample evidence has already been provided; very simple, truly, is its teaching, and very intelligible: "The Lord God formed MAN of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man BECAME A LIVING SOUL" (Gen. ii. 7). There is no need for a multiplicity of phrases to describe such a soul; no amplifications about essences, principles, vital sparks, entities, immaterialities and invisibilities; a soul meets your senses when you behold a man, or when you survey yourself. The true doctrine cannot be more exactly delivered than in the words of Milton, who was not merely a sublime poet, but an independent thinker, and a faithful and devout student of his Bible:

"Man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound and separable; not, according to common opinion, made up and framed of *two* distinct and different natures, as of body and soul, but *the whole man is soul, and the soul man;* that is to say, a body or substance, individual, animated, sensitive and rational" (*Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, vol. I., pp. 250, 251).

To the soul-man the words were addressed, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt THOU return;" and when the living became a dead soul, we are unable to discover what was to be set free and continue in the exercise of consciousness in some other world. To Sheol—the grave—the soul of the first man went, there to rest in dreamless slumber; just as the soul of Jesus, or the soul-man Jesus, whose nature followed the Adamic type, after making "His soul"—Himself, His complete humanity—a sacrifice for human guilt, descended into the gloom, where no thought arises, no praise echoes; whence He came forth on the third day, the Conqueror of Death and the Fountain of Immortality.

3rd Objection.—This view—the popular one—represents the Resurrection as of comparatively insignificant moment. It relates merely to the raising of the "*dead body;*" that is, the "dead body," as contradistinguished from the soul. What is worthy of notice is, that in the whole narrative, or, in modern phraseology, report of the debate, the words *soul and body do not occur.* Yet the annotator was forced to call on them for service in his commentary. It would not do to be content with saying the Patriarchs were alive; that sounded rather strong, and hence it is changed and modified into souls—"their *souls* were alive," for, in the imagination of orthodoxy, souls cannot die. Again, it would hardly pass to affirm that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were to be resurrected, inasmuch as that also sounded rather unguarded, and hence in turn it is

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modified into body; "the bodies of the dead," for bodies can die, and, of course, are capable of resurrection. All of which, we submit, is a chase of words and a dance of ideas, instead of a plain statement, the Patriarchs are dead, and the Patriarchs are to be resurrected. Does the Bible cause this whirling, placing and displacing, combining and dissevering, fencing and saving? No; the system of theology demands it, because it lacks the directness and simplicity of truth, though pious men constructed the fabric and set it up for homage in the most sacred temple.

The Sadducees understood our Lord to inculcate the raising of dead men to life; a truly grand conception, and, if needed at all, an inexpressibly momentous necessity. With orthodoxy, however, the dispute is not concerning men, but the humblest part of men, which they can lose and be men still; which they can be deprived of, and enter on the most exalted functions of their nature quite unimpaired, nay, with a perfection unknown in this sublunary term of being. Does that representation not reduce the value of resurrection to the lowest possible standard, and render the language of Scripture in relation thereto inexplicably exaggerated?

Take this as a specimen of how the Resurrection—not without reason we may be assured—is spoken of, and grandly magnified by the inspired writers: "And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in"—the faith of—"Christ are perished" (1 Cor. xv. 17, 18). In harmony with the Old Testament, Paul says the dead saints are *asleep*, not awake; and he testifies further, that unless there be a resurrection they have perished. Not gone to endure excruciating agonies for ever, surely? Perish means to *lose life*, not to have it preserved in unutterable woe: it is equal to death; a going out of being. Perished is the negation of suffering pain; for mortal disease or injury causes men ultimately to perish; but the anguish is over so soon as the consummation is reached, that is, when the sufferers have perished.

But comes forward an orthodox Christian, and energetically protests that men cannot perish in that sense. To which our answer is: Friend, we prefer the Apostle of the Gentiles to you, and he avers men can perish, yea, perish utterly; and, for ourselves, we accept his deliverance with unwavering trust. If he intended to communicate this information, "They also who have fallen asleep have" gone to endless torment, could he not easily have so expressed himself? He was familiar with the Greek language and skilled in composition; and, infinitely better than that attainment, was guided by the Spirit of God, whose merciful aim is to instruct men, not to lead them astray. That point being understood, we now see the immeasurable interest wrapt up and preserved in a resurrection. It is a question of life or *no* life beyond the tomb. Without a resurrection such as Christ promises, and on which the entombed saints relied, those who have fallen asleep wake no more. All is over with them, and it will soon be all over with each of us. Our faith is vain, our hope is vain; we have believed and confided in a myth; the grave is our eternal prison.

You object, says some one, to the commentator's phrase, "dead body;" do you not know that substantially the language is common in Scripture? We are not ignorant of the fact, nevertheless we maintain

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that the compiler of the *Notes*, like thousands besides, employs the words in a wrong sense. Ordinarily in theological productions body is used in contradistinction from soul, while the Volume recognises no such difference, as is admirably expressed in the passage from Milton quoted above. In such examples as these, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. iii. 21); "It is sown a natural"—or animal—"body, it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44); in these and all similar verses the essential idea is that of personality, or unity, introducing no distinction of parts. Making a distinction of parts, is a work of the purest theological fiction. The first we have transcribed is equal to this: Who shall change us from a low corruptible mode of living into one resembling His own; the second is equivalent to this: We are buried natural, or soulical persons, we shall rise—return to life—in a new type of humanity called the spiritual.

(*To be continued.*)

THE MAN OF SIN.

2 THESS. ii. 1-8.

THE question next requiring an answer is as follows:—

(3.) Do facts bear out the idea that the bishop of Rome has opposed and exalted himself against all civil or ecclesiastical rulers, or both? Keeping in mind that we have endeavoured to show that "all that is called God or that is worshipped" is capable of being understood in the limited sense of human rulers, it is a fact well known to all who have paid any attention to Church history, that the bishops of Rome have not only claimed universal authority over civil rulers, which is perhaps as much as the language of the apostle requires, but they have actually been permitted, in many instances, to put this claim into actual operation among the States of Europe. In his "Dissertations on the Prophecies," Thomas Newton, D.D., Bishop of Bristol, states this fact in a single sentence, which may serve as a summary of what we shall find detailed in the pages of history. The bishop says that the pope has exalted himself "not only above inferior magistrates, but likewise above bishops and primates, exerting an absolute jurisdiction and uncontrolled supremacy over all; not only above bishops and primates, but likewise above kings and emperors, deposing some and advancing others, obliging them to prostrate themselves before him, to kiss his toe, to hold his stirrup, to wait barefooted at his gate, treading even upon the neck, and kicking off the imperial crown with his foot," &c.

This comprehensive summary of Bishop Newton, however, must not be accepted even on his authority. We must inquire of the historians who have written the civil and ecclesiastical annals of Europe for the purpose of ascertaining the real facts of the case. Pursuing this course, we might try to ascertain the accuracy of the statement that the bishops of Rome claimed, and even to a large extent exercised, supremacy over the civil rulers of Europe in their political relations.

We must here premise that this pitch of power was not reached at

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once; that, in fact, it had, like the tide, a flow and an ebb. It was not till the 13th century of the Christian era that this tide of papal supremacy reached high-water mark; although for several centuries before and after that period it maintained a greater or less degree of ascendancy. We shall glance, therefore, at several facts in the history of Europe during the period named, so as to put the main count in the charge beyond the possibility of dispute.

The general fact of papal supremacy over the civil power is patent to the reader of European history. Guizot, in his "History of Civilisation in Europe"—treating generally of the period between 5th and 12th century—says, "By a tendency natural to human ambition and pride, the church endeavoured to establish for the spiritual power not only independence, but supremacy over the temporal power." And he represents the "spiritual power" as reasoning. "How! I have right and sway over what is most lofty and independent in man—over his reason, his inward will, his conscience—and shall I not have right over his outward, material, and fleeting interests? I, who am the interpreter of justice and truth, shall I be debarred from regulating earthly matters according to justice and truth?" And, mentioning the monopoly of mentality possessed by the church, he says, "The spiritual power thus finding itself at the head of the whole activity of the human brain, naturally fell into a self-assumption of the general government of the world."

The late Henry Hallam, in his "View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages," says, "The noonday of papal dominion extends from the pontificate of Innocent III., inclusively to that of Boniface VIII.; or, in other words, through the thirteenth century. Rome inspired during this age all the terror of her ancient name. She was once more the mistress of the world, and kings were her vassals." The first-named pope's claims were thus expressed in his own words: "As the sun and the moon are placed in the firmament, the greater as the light of the day and the lesser of the night, thus are these two powers in the church—the pontifical, which, as having the charge of souls, is the greater; and the royal, which is the less, and to which the bodies of men only are entrusted." Hallam, from whom this quotation is extracted, says of it, "Intoxicated with these conceptions (if we may apply such a word to successful ambition) he thought no quarrel of princes beyond the sphere of his jurisdiction." The second-named Pope (Boniface VIII.), nearly a century later, in a constitution termed "Unam Sanctum," promulgated in a church council held at Rome, declares that "the church is one body, and has one head. Under its command are two swords, the one spiritual, the other temporal; that to be used by the supreme pontiff himself; this by kings and knights, by his licence and at his will. But the lesser sword must be subject to the greater, and the temporal to the spiritual authority. He concludes by declaring the subjection of every human being to the see of Rome to be an article of necessary faith." Hallam mentions that "another bull pronounces all persons of whatever rank obliged to appear when personally cited before the audience or apostolical tribunal at Rome," "since such is our pleasure, who by divine permission, rule the world."

"But the epoch," remarks Hallam, "when the spirit of papal usurpation was most strikingly displayed was the pontificate of Innocent III.

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In each of the three leading objects which Rome has pursued, independent sovereignty, supremacy over the Christian Church, control over the princes of the earth, it was the fortune of this pontiff to conquer." It may be remarked in passing that it was this Pope who established the Inquisition. In Chambers' Encyclopædia, Innocent is thus spoken of: "His pontificate is justly regarded as the culminating point of the temporal, as well as the spiritual supremacy of the Roman see; and it is freely avowed by the learned historian of Latin Christianity, that if ever the great idea of a Christian republic, with a Pope at its head, was to be realised, 'none could bring more lofty or more various qualifications for its accomplishment than Innocent III.' Accordingly, under the impulse of his ardent but disinterested zeal for the glory of the church, almost every state and kingdom was brought into subjection."

Leaving these general historical statements regarding the time of Innocent III., we must begin our more detailed evidence at an earlier period. It was chiefly during the pontificate of Gregory VII. (more than a century earlier) that the way had been prepared for what was accomplished by Innocent III. Hallam puts the relations of both these popes, and a subsequent one, very forcibly thus: "As Gregory VII. appears the most usurping of mankind till we read the history of Innocent III., so Innocent III. is thrown into shade by the superior audacity of Boniface VIII." In Chambers' Encyclopædia Gregory VII. is termed "pre-eminently the historical representative of the temporal claims of the mediæval papacy;" and in Cassell's Biographical Dictionary, he is described as "a man of extraordinary abilities and sagacity, fired with the greatest ambition for the exaltation of the Holy See, proud and impetuous, and devoid of any strong religious character. . . . He strove to subject the Church Catholic to the will of the Pope, and to exempt clerics and church property from civil control. . . . He endeavoured to make all kingdoms fiefs to the pontiffs; and to form an episcopal council to meet annually at Rome, which was to take charge of all the kings and peoples of the world. He was unable to succeed in this owing to the opposition of William the Conqueror and Philip I. of France. But though he failed in this great attempt, he wrought a mighty change in the political state of Europe, abridging or annulling the rights of kings and emperors," &c. He was, according to Hallam, "by far the most conspicuous person in the eleventh century."

Christopher William Koch, Professor of Public Law in the University of Strasburg, in his "History of the Revolutions of Europe," gives a concise yet clear account of this portion of papal history in connection with European politics. This work is written in a tone of moderation and candour, and has been highly commended by eminent authorities, both French and German, and affords a convenient means of stating the facts of the case. I shall, therefore, quote a few extracts from it.

"A new and powerful monarchy rose on the ruins of the German Empire, that of the Roman pontiffs, which monopolised both spiritual and temporal dominion; and extended its influence over all the kingdoms of Christendom. This supremacy, whose artful and complicated mechanism is still an object of astonishment to the most subtle politicians, was the work of Pope Gregory VII., a man born for great undertakings, as remarkable for his genius, which raised him above his times, as for the

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austerity of his manners, and the boundless reach of his ambition. Indignant at the depravity of the age, which was immersed in ignorance and vice, and at the gross immorality which pervaded all classes of society, both laymen and ecclesiastics, Gregory resolved to become the reformer of morals and the restorer of religion. To succeed in this project it was necessary to replace the government of kings, which had totally lost its power and efficiency by a new authority, whose salutary restraints, imposed alike on the high and the low, might restore vigour to the laws, put a stop to licentiousness, and impose a reverence on all by the sanctity of its origin. This authority was the spiritual supremacy of the pope, of which Gregory was at once the creator and inventor.

"While he was cardinal (Hildebrand), taking advantage of the minority of Henry IV. (Emperor of Germany), he caused, in a council held at Rome (1059), the famous decree to be passed, which, by reserving the election of the pontiffs principally to the cardinals, converted the elective privileges which the emperors formerly enjoyed in virtue of their crown rights, into a personal favour granted by the Pope. . . .

"On the death of Pope Nicolas II., Hildebrand procured the election of Alexander II., without waiting for the order or concurrence of the imperial court; and he succeeded in maintaining him in the apostolic chair against Pope Honorius II., whom the reigning empress had destined for that honour. At length, being raised himself to the pontifical throne, scarcely had he obtained the imperial confirmation, when he put in execution the project which he had so long been concerting and preparing, viz., the erecting of a spiritual despotism extending to priests as well as kings; making the supreme pontiff the arbiter in all affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical—the bestower of favours, and the dispenser of crowns. The basis of this dominion was, that the Vicar of Jesus Christ ought to be superior to all human power. . . .

"At that time the city of Rome, and the whole ecclesiastical states, as well as the greater part of Italy, were subject to the kings of Germany, who in virtue of their being kings of Italy and Roman emperors, nominated or confirmed the popes, and installed the prefects of Rome, who there received the power of the sword in their name. They sent also every year Commissioners to Rome to levy the money due to the royal treasury. The popes used to date their acts from the years of the emperor's reign, and to stamp their coin with his name; and all the higher clergy were virtually bound and subject to the secular power by the solemn investiture (by the sovereign) of the ring and the crosier. This investiture gave to the emperors and the other sovereigns the right of nominating and confirming bishops, and even of deposing them if they saw cause. It gave them, moreover, the right of conferring, at their pleasure, those fiefs (chiefly lands) and royal prerogatives which the munificence of princes had vested in the church. The emperors, in putting bishops and prelates in possession of these fiefs, used the symbols of the ring and the crosier, which were badges of honour belonging to bishops and abbots. They made them at the same time take the oath of fidelity and allegiance; and this was the origin of their dependence and their obligation to furnish their princes with troops, and to perform military service.

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"Gregory VII. prohibited, under pain of excommunication, all sovereigns to exercise the rights of investiture, by a formal decree which he published in a council assembled at Rome in 1074. There was more than the simple ceremony of the ring and the crosier implied in this interdict. He aimed at depriving princes of the right of nominating, confirming, or deposing prelates, as well as of receiving their fealty and homage, and exacting military service. He thus broke all those ties by which the bishops were held in allegiance and subordination to princes; making them, in this respect, entirely independent. In suppressing investitures the pontiff had yet a more important object in view. It was his policy to withdraw both himself and his successors, as well as the whole ecclesiastical state, from the power of the German kings, especially by abolishing the right which these princes had so long exercised of nominating and confirming the popes. He saw, in fact, that if he could succeed in rendering the clergy independent of the secular power, it would follow, by a natural consequence, that the Pope, as being supreme head of the clergy, would no longer be dependent on the emperors; while the emperor excluded from the nominating and investiture of bishops would have still less right to interfere in the election of pontiffs."

Professor Koch then refers to the effect of this policy in divesting princes of the right to dispose of ecclesiastical fiefs, seeing they had committed the unfortunate error of putting the greater part of their domains into the hands of ecclesiastics. If they could have retained the patronage they might have exercised control over the persons possessing benefices. He also shows the influence of the law of celibacy in severing another bond of union between the clergy and the civil orders of society. Gregory endeavoured to enforce this law more vigorously than ever, renewing it in a council held at Rome (1074); enjoining the married priests (of whom there were still many, not only in Germany, England, and the kingdoms of the North, but even in France, Spain, and Italy) either to quit their wives, or renounce the sacerdotal order. His design was not to render the clergy independent, but to make them subservient to his own elevation, and to employ them in humbling the power of the princes.

He then mentions the use which was made by Gregory of the *False Decretals* forged about the beginning of the ninth century, and attributed to the early bishops of Rome. I shall here give more fully Hallam's account of their nature. He says: "Their effect was to diminish the authority of metropolitans over their suffragans, by establishing an appellant jurisdiction of the Roman See in all causes, and by forbidding national councils to be holden without its consent. Every bishop was amenable only to the immediate tribunal of the pope; by which one of the most ancient rights of the provincial synod was abrogated . . . Upon these spurious decretals was built the great fabric of papal supremacy over the different national churches; a fabric which has stood after its foundation crumbled beneath it; for no one has pretended to deny, for the last two centuries, that the imposture is too palpable for any but the most ignorant ages to credit." Koch affirms that Gregory fully carried out this policy, and, in a council held at Rome in 1079, even prescribed a new oath for the bishops of fealty and homage such as

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they, as lieges, vowed to their sovereigns. This he "claimed for himself alone, bearing that they should aid and defend, against the whole world, his new supremacy, and what he called the royal rights of St. Peter." This was maintained and augmented by his successors, in spite of its inconsistency with that which the bishops swore to their princes.

Another means by which Gregory confirmed his new authority was by sending more frequently into the states of Christendom papal representatives, called legates. He made them a kind of governors of provinces with ample powers, which greatly impaired the authority of metropolitans, bishops, and councils. The bishops were even required by their oath to furnish maintenance for these legates, which led to frequent exactions and impositions.

Koch next touches on Gregory's direct interference with the civil power. He says: "While occupied with the means of extending his power over the clergy, he did not let slip any opportunity of making encroachments on the authority of princes and sovereigns, which he represented as subordinate to that of the church and the pope. As supreme head of the church he claimed a right of inspection over all kings and their governments. He deemed himself authorised to address admonitions to them as to the method of ruling their kingdoms; and to demand of them an account of their conduct. By-and-by he presumed to listen to the complaints of subjects against their princes, and claimed the right of being a judge or arbiter between them. In this capacity he acted towards Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, who enjoyed the rights of sovereignty over Rome and the pope. He summoned him to Rome (1076) for the purpose of answering before the synod to the principal accusations which the nobles of Saxony, engaged in disputes with that prince, had referred to the pope. The emperor, burning with indignation, and hurried on by the impetuosity of youth, instantly convoked an assembly of bishops at Worms, and there caused the pontiff to be deposed. No sooner was this sentence conveyed to Rome, and read in the presence of the pope in a council which he had assembled, than Gregory ventured on a step till then quite unheard of. He immediately thundered a sentence of excommunication and deposition against the emperor, which was addressed to St. Peter, and couched in the following terms:—

"In the name of Almighty God, I suspend and interdict from governing the kingdom of Germany and Italy, Henry, son of the Emperor Henry, who, with a haughtiness unexampled, has dared to rebel against thy church. I absolve all Christians whatever from the oath which they have taken, or shall hereafter take, to him; and henceforth none shall be permitted to do him homage or service as king; for he who would disobey the authority of thy church, deserves to lose the dignity with which he is invested. And seeing this prince has refused to submit as a Christian, and has not returned to the Lord whom he hath forsaken, holding communion with the excommunicated, and despising the advice which I tendered him for the safety of his soul, I load him with curses in thy name, to the end that people may know even by experience, that thou art Peter, and that on this rock the Son of the living God has built his church; and that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it."

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This measure, which seemed at first to have been merely the effect of the pontiff's impetuosity, soon discovered of what importance it was for him to persevere, and what advantage he might derive from it. In humbling the emperor, the most powerful monarch in Europe, he might hope that all the other sovereigns would bend before him. He omitted nothing, therefore, that might serve to justify his conduct, and endeavoured to prove, by sophistries, that if he had authority to excommunicate the emperor, he might likewise deprive him of his dignity; and that the right to release subjects from their oath of allegiance was an emanation and a natural consequence of the power of the keys. The same equivocal interpretation he afterwards made use of in a sentence which he published against the same prince (1080), and which he addressed to the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, in these terms:—

"You, fathers and princes of the apostles, hereby make known to the whole world, that if you can bind and unbind in heaven, you can much more, on earth, take from all men empires, kingdoms, principalities, duchies, marquisates, counties, and possessions, of whatsoever nature they may be. You have often deprived the unworthy of patriarchates, primacies, archbishoprics, and bishoprics, to give them to persons truly religious. Hence, if you preside over spiritual affairs, does not your jurisdiction extend *a fortiori* to temporal and secular dignities? And if you judge the angels who rule over princes and potentates, even the haughtiest, will you not also judge their slaves? Let, then, the kings and princes of the earth learn how great and irresistible is your power! Let them tremble to contemn the commands of your church! And do you, blessed Peter, and blessed Paul, exercise, from this time forward, your judgment on Henry, that the whole earth may know that he has been humbled, not by any human contingencies, but solely by your power."

"Until that time," continues Koch, "the emperors had exercised the right of confirming the popes, and even of deposing them, should there be occasion; but by a strange reverse of prerogatives, the popes now arrogated to themselves the confirmation of the emperors, and even usurped the right of dethroning them.

"However irregular this step of the pontiff might be, it did not fail to produce the intended effect. In an assembly of the Imperial States held at Tribur (1076), the emperor could only obtain their consent to postpone their proceeding to a new election, and that on the express condition of his submitting himself to the judgment of the pope, and being absolved immediately from the excommunication he had incurred. In consequence of this decision of the States, Henry crossed the Alps in the middle of winter to obtain reconciliation with the pope, who then resided with the famous Countess Matilda, at her castle of Canossa, in the Modenese territory. Absolution was not granted him, however, except under conditions the most humiliating. He was compelled to do penance in an outer court of the castle, in a woollen shirt and barefooted for three successive days, and afterwards to sign whatever terms the pontiff chose to prescribe. This extraordinary spectacle must have spread consternation among the sovereigns of Europe, and made them tremble at the censures of the church.

"After this Gregory VII. exerted his utmost influence to engage all

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sovereigns, without distinction, to acknowledge themselves his vassals and tributaries. 'Let not the emperor imagine,' says he, in a letter which he wrote to the German nation, 'that the church is submitted to him as a slave, but let him know that she is set over him as a sovereign.' From that time the pontiff regarded the empire as a fief of his church; and afterwards, when setting up a rival emperor to Henry IV., in the person of Hermann of Luxemburg, he exacted from him a formal oath of vassalage. Gregory pursued the same conduct in regard to the other sovereigns of Europe. Boleslaus II., King of Poland, having killed Stanislaus, Bishop of Cracow, who had ventured to excommunicate him, the pontiff took occasion from this to depose that prince; releasing all his subjects from their oath of fidelity, and even prohibiting the Polish bishops henceforth to crown any king without the express consent of the Pope.

"This aspiring pontiff stuck at nothing; he regarded nothing, provided he could obtain his object. However contrary the customs of former times were to his pretensions, he quoted them as examples of authority, and with a boldness capable of imposing anything on weak and ignorant minds. It was thus that, in order to oblige the French nation to pay him the tax of one penny each house, he alleged the example of Charlemagne, and pretended that that prince had not merely paid this tribute, but even granted Saxony as a fief to St. Peter; as he had conquered it with the assistance of that apostle. In writing to Philip I. of France, he expressed himself in these terms: 'Strive to please St. Peter, who has thy kingdom as well as thy soul in his power; and who can bind thee, and absolve in heaven as well as on earth.' And in a letter which he addressed to the princes of Spain, he attempted to persuade them that the kingdom of Spain, being originally the property of the Holy See, they could not exonerate themselves from paying him a tax on all the lands they had conquered from the infidels.

"He affirmed to Solomon, King of Hungary, that Stephen I., on receiving his crown at the hands of Pope Silvester II., had surrendered his kingdom as free property to the Holy See; and that in virtue of this donation his kingdom was to be considered as a part of the domain of the Church. He wrote in exactly the same style to Geysa, his immediate successor. In one of his letters to Suena, King of Denmark, he enjoins him to deliver up his kingdom to the power of the Romish See. He refused (1076) to grant the royal dignity to Demetrius Swinimir, Duke of Croatia and Dalmatia, except on the express condition that he should do him homage for his kingdom, and engage to pay the Pope an annual tribute of two hundred golden pieces of Byzantium. This pontiff had the art of disguising his ambition so dexterously, under the mask of justice and piety, that he prevailed with various other sovereigns to acknowledge themselves his vassals. Bertrand, Count of Provence, transferred to him his fealty and homage, to the prejudice of those feudal obligations he owed to the empire. Several princes of Italy and Germany, influenced by artifice or intimidation, abandoned the emperor, and put themselves under submission to the pope. His efforts were not equally successful with William the Conqueror, King of England, whom he had politely invited by letter to do him homage for his kingdom, after the manner of his royal predecessors. That prince, too wise to be duped

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by papal imposition, replied that he was not in a humour to perform homage which he had never promised, and which he was not aware had ever been performed by any of his predecessors.

Possibly the following is the letter referred to by Koch. I find it quoted by James Bryce, D.C.L., in his "Holy Roman Empire," from Migne, cxlviii., p. 568, as a letter from Gregory VII. to William I., A.D. 1080:—

"As for the beauty of this world, that it may be at different seasons perceived by fleshly eyes, God hath disposed the sun and the moon lights that outshine all others; so, lest the creature whom His goodness hath formed after His own image in this world should be drawn astray into fatal dangers, He hath provided in the apostolic and royal dignities the means of ruling it through divers offices. . . . If I therefore am to answer for thee on the dreadful day of judgment before the just Judge who cannot lie, the Creator of every creature, bethink thee whether I must not very diligently provide for thy salvation, and whether for thine own safety, thou oughtest not without delay, to obey me that so thou mayest possess the land of the living." J. CAMERON.

Edinburgh.

"NOW IS THE SON OF MAN GLORIFIED."

1. O WONDROUS grace! the dismal hour
When all seemed lost for man
Became the dawn of splendid day,
In God's eternal plan.

2. The traitor sold his holy Lord
To foes that sought His blood,
But this amazing crime evoked
The purposes of God.

3. To raging hate of cruel men,
Almighty power had set
A limit, which it could not pass,
Where shame and glory met.

4. The Saviour saw the golden light
Beyond the cloud of gloom,
In which the ransomed of the Lord
Eternally should bloom.

5. And seeing this His heart rejoiced,
Despite Satanic power;
He felt that He was glorified
From that most awful hour!

THETA.

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THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Chapter V.

Abraham taken into Confidence—Ishmael cast out—Isaac Offered up.

ON the eve of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham is taken into the Divine confidence concerning the impending catastrophe. The language used by way of showing cause for conferring on Abraham this honour touches our subject at one or two points, and will repay attention.

Genesis xviii. 16-19.

"(16) And the men rise up from thence, and look out over the face of Sodom; Abraham also is going with them to set them on their way.

"(17) Now Yehweh has said: Am I to hide from Abraham what I am about to do; (18) seeing that Abraham is sure to become a great and mighty nation, so shall all nations be blessed in him? (19) For I have a care for him, in order that he may command his sons and his household after him; so shall they keep the way of Yehweh by doing righteousness and justice: in order that Yehweh may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken concerning him. (20) So Yehweh says," &c.

Here, once more, the ultimate results of the Abrahamic Covenant to the outlying nations of the earth, come into view; and that in such a way as to confirm our impression that those results will amount to much more than a mere exclamation of admiration and envy of Abraham's seed by the nations. The good to be realised by those nations seems to be so real as to lie near to the heart of the God of the whole earth. He weaves it into His calculations!

Again: it is manifest that there is to be some connection between the size and power of *the* nation which is to spring from Abraham and those ulterior benefits in store for the other nations of the earth: "A great and mighty nation, so shall all nations be blessed in him." The one nation is to bring about the blessing of the other nations; and it is to do this by being great and mighty. Assuming now—as it is natural for Christians to assume—that the world-wide blessing spoken of is absolutely conditioned by the advent of the Messiah in the fullness of the times, this passage necessarily brings the great and mighty nation into union with the Messiah as a means to be used by Him in bringing about the blessed consummation: for clearly the great nation must play its destined part either without the Messiah or with Him. To say it will do so *without Him*, were to be blind to the subsequent developments of redemption in the Old Testament Scriptures, which Scriptures ever more and more pointedly proclaim the coming of one particular Redeeming Person of Abraham's lineage; blind also to the failure of that nation, so long as its Messiah had not come, to work deliverance in the earth (Isa. xxvi. 18). To say it will be *with Him*, is to say what harmonises alike with Old Testament and New; but at the same time it is to say what corrects those who say the Hebrew people, as a great and mighty nation, has no essential part assigned to it in the work of bringing the world back to God.

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Here then is a brilliant conception enfolded as a germ in this passage —lamentably absent from the current religious teaching of the day—but spread out in gorgeous colours in the writings of the prophets. God intends to show what He can do in the national sphere; He intends to demonstrate in one particular Abrahamic nation wherein national greatness and strength truly lie; and He intends by this means to make that nation the envy and the emulation, and not only so, but the benefactress also of all the nations of the earth.

GENESIS xxi. 8-13.

"(8) So the child grows and is weaned; and Abraham makes a great banquet on the day of the weaning of Isaac. (9) Then Sarah beholds the son of Hagar the Egyptian woman, whom she bare to Abraham, laughing. (10) So she says to Abraham: Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman must not inherit with my son, with Isaac.

"(11) Then is the word grievous exceedingly in the eyes of Abraham, on account of his son.

"(12) So God says unto Abraham: It may not be grievous in thine eyes concerning the boy or concerning the bondwoman; in all that Sarah says unto thee, hearken to her voice; for in Isaac shall there be called to thee a seed. (13) Notwithstanding even the son of the bondwoman will I make into a nation, because thy seed is he."

At length from Sarah herself is Isaac born to Abraham. He is not born until faith and patience have been well exercised—not born until all the weariness, and mistakes, and compromises of unbelief have been dispelled or superseded. Thus Isaac is emphatically the child of faith, born after the manner of the Spirit; not indeed in a wholly supernatural way, nor yet so that the fault and corruption of human nature should have no place in him; but by natural generation Divinely energised and made fruitful beyond the ordinary course of things.

This fact is of peculiar interest in this first covenant child of Abraham, because it illustrates the principle that Abraham's seed may stand in a two-fold relation to their father, and be his both by nature and by grace, both in the flesh and in the spirit. So that, although nations may be appointed to Abraham, given to him, affiliated upon him by the bond of faith alone without the intervention of the flesh; yet it is possible that one particular nation should come to inherit both Abraham's flesh and Abraham's faith. Of such a nation Isaac is, by the very facts of the case, a most striking type.

The casting out of Ishmael next deserves a moment's attention. Ishmael was the offspring of compromise and of partial unbelief; and, therefore, since such a child could not serve the supreme purposes of God's grace, it really was not wholly fitting that he should inherit along with the child of uncompromising trust, on whom Divine wisdom had fixed its choice. The child of faith alone is qualified to inherit the Abrahamic Covenant, the preciousness of which unspeakably outweighs that of all Abraham's flocks and herds, and silver and servants. Hence, while it is quite possible that something of human infirmity may have mingled with Sarah's indignation when she beheld Ishmael laughing at Isaac, at the same time we need not be surprised when we find Sarah's

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demand Divinely sustained. Moreover, on Sarah's part, there may have been a peculiar religious reverence, working out in her a genuine repentance over her former faltering of faith and rather presumptuous management, in the matter of giving Hagar to her husband. The exceeding greatness of God's grace to herself at length, we can well believe to have made the very sight of Hagar and Ishmael obnoxious in her eyes.

Ishmael was cast out; but not from everything. He was not cast out from his mother's constant love. He was not cast out from his noble father's high-principled and affectionate solicitude. Still more: he was not cast out from an ever-watchful and bountiful Providence, in whose lap he was not so much cast as tenderly laid. Most of all: he was not cast out from the circumference of that covenant, the central place in which he was not permitted to occupy with his foster-brother Isaac; for, after the casting out had taken full effect, still nothing had happened to exclude the "families" of Ishmael from among "all the families of the earth" towards whom streams of ultimate blessing were to flow. God heard Abraham's prayer on Ishmael's behalf; promised to make of him a great nation; and gave as reason that he, too, was Abraham's seed.

One thing more before this suggestive incident is dismissed. We have already seen exemplified, in the choice of Isaac and rejection of Ishmael, the principle of election to special privilege. Is there not, half concealed beneath the peculiar expression of verse 12, an intimation that this principle is yet to receive fuller development: "In Isaac shall there be called to thee a seed?" This is not quite the same thing as saying, "The seed of Isaac shall be thy seed." Is there, then, to be some more casting out? So it would seem; and the history shows that so it came to pass. Not all Isaac's seed were found worthy to become inheritors of the holy covenant. One of his two sons was "profane." But we must not anticipate.

GENESIS xxii. 15-18.

"(15) Then cries out the messenger of Yehweh unto Abraham a second time out of the heavens, (16) and says:

"By Myself have I sworn, is the oracle of Yehweh: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only one; (17) that I will richly bless thee and abundantly multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the lip of the sea; so shall thy seed take possession of the gate of his [*or* its] foes; (18) and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves in thy seed: because thou hast hearkened unto My voice."

For brevity's sake, only so much of this deeply moving chapter is cited as immediately concerns our subject. Nevertheless we need not deny ourselves the pleasure of leading up to the paragraph quoted by glancing at the narrative which precedes.

1. It is GOD HIMSELF this time who puts Abraham to the proof. No prophet is sent to him with the awful command to offer up his beloved Isaac as a burnt-offering. No "providence" forms the chastening rod; far less is Abraham left to infer, by any process of reasoning, that he ought to sacrifice his son. There appears to be something particularly appropriate in this. GOD *has* a right to take the life He Himself has

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given; no one else has. Hence it is well that Abraham should receive the trying demand direct from Him who alone had the right to make it: for one can scarcely help feeling that the credentials of almost any conceivable messenger must break down under the weight of such an errand as the carrying of this command. For what father's heart would not be ready to say: "Unless God Himself bid me, I cannot believe this to be His Will?" Then, too, the reflection comes in, that it has not been the way of God with Abraham to send messengers to him. Abraham is His friend, to whom He has many times revealed Himself; with whom He has freely conversed. Abraham knows God's way; recognises His voice; perceives himself to be communing with One who knows his life's story and reads his heart. And, therefore, as on the one hand it would have been distant and chilling and trying to our patriarch had his Divine Friend now withheld His accustomed self-manifestation; so on the other, his instant recognition of God, and his consequent perfect certainty that it is His own loving, guiding, covenant God who asks this thing at his hands, cannot but go far to smooth the path of obedience. We are glad, therefore, that it was God Himself who put Abraham to this fiery ordeal.

2. The next thing that strikes us is the *time* at which this severe testing takes place. Isaac is now about twenty-five years of age. Abraham is now one hundred and twenty-five years old. It is forty-five years since the God of glory appeared to him in Haran, and fifty since He first revealed Himself in Ur of the Chaldees. All this while—for half a century—Abraham has been intimate with God: has witnessed His appearances, heard His voice, built altars for His worship, has sought Him in trouble and found Him to his joy, has been receiving a continual increase of wealth, and been in the position of an honoured and influential Syrian chief. Still more: Isaac himself has been the delight of his father's eyes for the last twenty-five years—*Isaac*, a living witness to Divine power, truth, goodness. If such a man as Abraham, at this time of day, is to be really tested, no ordinary trial will do. And thus to the Divine right to demand Isaac we have to add the proportionateness of so great a trial to so great a man.

3. Yet we must not exaggerate the greatness of the trial; and in particular we must not forget how much there was in the circumstances of the case to kindle a lively and sustaining expectation of deliverance from the fiery ordeal. Abraham's position at this crisis is peculiar—in fact, it is absolutely unique. He is called upon to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac; and yet he knows that he cannot really lose him. For is not Isaac the covenant child? Have not the promises of an innumerable seed been made to centre in Isaac so clearly as to put it beyond question that this very young man must live and become a father? Just think, for a moment, how the discipline of years has fastened this as a nail in a sure place in Abraham's mind. Time was when, as years advanced and no son was given, our patriarch could suppose that some abatement might have to be made from the apparent meaning of the Divine promise of a posterity. An adopted son might be constituted his heir; or it might be, as Sarah suggested, that a son might be given him for God's purposes by means of Hagar, her Egyptian handmaid. Time was when these diverging thoughts seemed not unreasonable. But God Himself has set them all aside, and at last actually given him Isaac from Sarah

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herself, with repeated assurances that *this* is the heir, *this* the progenitor of the promised great and mighty nation. It is not possible to imagine any further doubt on this point existing in Abraham's mind. All has been settled for a quarter of a century. During the whole of this time fond hope has had nothing to do but entwine itself about this pillar of certainty. And now can Isaac die and remain dead? Impossible! Whatever happens this cannot be. And therefore we say that, at least after the amazement of the first moment has subsided and Abraham can collect his thoughts and call to mind the solid basis of promise he has to go upon, nothing can be more sure to him than that Isaac must yet live and fulfil his covenanted destiny. Either the sacrifice will, at the last moment, be countermanded; or, though it be even consummated, the dead Isaac must be brought back again to life. The more readily do we perceive that these Divine possibilities must have buoyed up Abraham's faith when we reflect on the way his Divine Friend had led him all his life long until now. The oft-reared altar of sacrifice has familiarised to him the idea of substitution: "I ought to die—this lamb dies for me." "My son, GOD will provide the lamb." But the altar has done more than teach substitution: it has pointed to an acceptable uplifting and surrender of life unto its Divine Giver. The pure life is given back to God. This is the lesson of the burnt-offering, with its spotless victim, and feeding flame, and sweet smell, and cloud of smoke ascending on high. A lesson this which goes beyond mere death; for God's delight in a pure life cannot be to end it. The burnt-offering or ascending-sacrifice therefore reaches forward (however imperfectly) to a *sublimed*, glorified, heaven-ascended life. Doubtless tradition—Divine instruction handed down from the time when sacrifices were first offered—has strengthened the resurrection-lesson of the ascending-sacrifice. Then, too, how much must that night-scene some years ago, already commented on, have deepened this lesson in Abraham's mind. He himself then came up from the horror and darkness of death to the light and life of fellowship with God—in a figure. All of which renders inherently credible the positive statement of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews that this also was present to Abraham's mind to sustain him in the trial: "He reckoned that even from among the dead God could raise him." We conclude, therefore, that Abraham's faith was not only strong, but lively; it was fully fledged: it could rise grandly on the wings of sanctified imagination. With this conclusion the whole narrative down to the nicest details accords:—the early rising; the intimation to the young men that both father and son would return from their worship; the calm reply to Isaac's touching question, "But where is the lamb?"—"My son, God will provide the lamb."

4. The trial we know was permitted to run the whole length of virtual consummation. Abraham was not spared the pain of binding his beloved son upon the altar and raising above him the gleaming knife. And therefore we may conclude that all hope that he would not be allowed to slay Isaac was taken away. By the time the messenger's voice arrested him he had as good as done the deed. Nothing but faith in resurrection remained. The thought—the readiness—the intention to give up Isaac even unto death, were sustained so as to make the inward act of sacrifice complete. There seems from the first to have

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been no hesitation; there appears to the last to be no recoil. Firmly, deliberately, persistently, faith moves on to victory. It is enough. Now God knows—what is there to be known: sees what is there to be seen. By works faith is perfected. By Abraham's perfected faith God Himself is justified for the confidence He has placed in His beloved servant.

5. The strain on Abraham's mind being at last relaxed, he seems at once in some measure to fall back into the more ordinary line of things in which he has been wont to move. The actual sacrifice of his son being dispensed with, the patriarch reverts to the idea of substitution. Accustomed as he has been to altar-worship, the sentiments of reverence and gratitude raise the instant wish not to have reared this memorable altar in vain. Did he not tell Isaac, on the way, that God would provide the lamb? Now, then, where is the substitute? He lifts up his eyes as if inquiringly; and beholding near at hand a ram caught in a thicket, he at once accepts the suggestion, and the ram is taken and slain instead of his son. The life-blood is poured forth—the pieces are laid, the wood is lighted—the smoke ascends—the sweet smell is perceived—the Divine Benefactor is adored—the worship is complete.

6. Then Abraham calls the name of the place, *Yehweh yireh*, "YEHWEH will provide." Observe he does not name the place, "Yehweh has provided," which would have been sufficient as a memorial. He does more than that: he both memorialises and he generalises. From a single crowning fact he draws a broad and standing conclusion, applicable to all possible trials, and all yet-needed reconcilements of seeming contradictions. It is as if he had said: "Let me learn from this day's salvation that, come what may, Yehweh will provide. I am to inherit this land, and yet I am to die before it can be mine: no matter, *Yehweh will provide*. All the families of the ground are to bless themselves in my seed, yet the families of the ground are passing away and my seed is at present only this young man: nevertheless, all shall be fulfilled, *Yehweh will provide*." And then it passed into a proverb. Godly men caught up the lesson: "In the mountain of Yehweh," said they, "shall provision be made." "If we are only in the mountain of God, only in the way of obedience, no matter though the trial may be severe as was Abraham's, Divine deliverance will come at last." Moreover—though we do not wish to be fanciful—how can we help being reminded (we put it to any candid Hebrew—how could *he* help being reminded, *if* he believed with us that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and was constituted the sacrificial Lamb of God to put away the sin of the world) that here in this mountain centuries afterwards the Great Provision was made. Yea! to crown all, hear what the Messiah Himself says: "Abraham your father exulted that he should see My day; and he saw it, and rejoiced." Did it not strike us at the time—as we marked the early rising, and heard the father's wondrously calm assurance to his son's touching question—that it was as though Abraham was moving majestically on in an elevated mood of exultant expectation? Having seen so much before, should he not see more than ever to-day? "And he saw, and rejoiced." He was not disappointed. He must needs call upon the mountain to attest his joy. Also the righteous in after days heard thereof and were glad.

7. And now at length the holy covenant comes afresh into view.

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With all the solemnity of a second outcry from the heavens, the Divine Messenger utters the words already cited: in which are three things to be observed. (*a*) The *oath:* "By myself have I sworn, is the oracle of Yehweh." There was an oath (as we observed at the time) involved in the formal covenanting of chapter xv.; but with suitable differences between the oath-taking then and the oath-taking now. Then it was not so prominent as to require express mention: now it is set in the forefront of the Divine oracle. Then the swearing was mutual: now it is God alone who mediates with an oath. Then the oath was bound up with a partially fulfilled condition on the human side; Abraham being then justified by faith but not by works, his faith not having then been made perfect, and hence he was after that still exhorted to walk before God and become perfect: now all this is changed, and as Abraham has completed his self-surrender and learned to revere God and to trust Him under all circumstances, no further exhortation is tendered, and the Divine assurance is given in the most positive form possible. God's counsel is immutable, and now can be shown to be so to the heirs of promise. Not that God has two oaths, one binding and the other not; but that, so long as a covenant proceeds upon unfulfilled conditions, even the utmost faithfulness does not demand a one-sided adherence to its stipulations. Henceforth the Abrahamic Covenant is immoveable. (*b*) The formal and emphatic recognition of Abraham's perfected *obedience:* "Because thou hast done this thing . . . because thou hast hearkened to My voice." The whole covenant has sprung from Divine favour, and the character of Abraham has been moulded under express Divine guidance; still, there is the recognition of the final triumphant act of obedience as that on which the fulfilment shall now most certainly proceed. There is no getting over the conditionality of the covenant: only the condition has now been fully performed, so far as Abraham at least is concerned. And unless God can break faith with his Beloved Friend, the covenant must now inevitably go on until every good thing promised in it has been Divinely made good. (*c*) Although we can scarcely say that anything new appears in the *promissory* part of this oracle, yet an intensity of expression suited to the occasion everywhere pervades it: "I will *richly* bless thee and *abundantly* multiply thy seed," etc. (Compare xiii. 16; xv. 5.). That Abraham might have enemies was merely hinted at chap. xii. 3; here it is assumed that he *will* have them; but they are to be completely defeated;—and so once more, over their defeat, the universal blessing to all nations is assured.

JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

"IN THE BEGINNING."

IT is a widely accepted notion that there is difficulty in reconciling the discoveries of science with what we read in the Bible, and I firmly believe that many are afraid of science for that reason; they are unwilling to study it for fear that it should tend to shake their faith in the Bible. And one of the most difficult points, perhaps the most difficult of all, to reconcile with Divine revelation, is supposed to be the dis-

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coveries of the science of geology as to the manner of the formation of the earth, when considered side by side with this first chapter of Genesis. People say that the two do not agree, and therefore that one of them must be wrong; that the two accounts of the formation of the world do not tally. Now there never was a greater mistake. So far from this chapter contradicting the deductions of science, it is a most glorious, a most marvellous proof of their accuracy.

Even at the outset an insuperable difficulty is said to be that science tells us that the creation of the world was a work of countless ages, while the Bible says it was a work of six days; and many consider that these are to be understood as literal days, forgetting that in the sight of the Lord a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. It seems to me impossible to conceive of time with reference to God the Eternal.

Now let us glance at the wonderful and striking agreement between the revelations of science and those of this first chapter of Genesis.

The study of geology, apart from the Bible, leads us to the conclusion that the various steps in creation were taken, that the various parts of creation were completed, exactly in the order in which they are set down in the Divine Book.

Take the facts as they occur.

The Bible tells us that *the earth was without form and void*, and speaks of the deep, the waters. Now scientific men are pretty well agreed that at one time the earth must have been in a fluid condition. It is said that this is so even now in the case of some of the heavenly bodies, and that in time they will solidify as has already happened in the case of the earth.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind. Here again is science exactly corroborated by the Bible. Geologists tell us that the oldest strata of the earth's surface contain no fauna, no animal remains at all, only vegetable. But this is not all. They tell us further that the earliest forms of vegetation were gigantic *grasses*, such as are found fossilised in the coal deposits, and that no flowers are found until a much later period, in fact, very little antecedent to the appearance of man.

The next step in the creation of the world, we read, was the formation of the inhabitants of the water. *Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life.* Again we have geology going side by side with Divine revelation; for the first animal deposits encountered in the earth's crust are those of the remains of denizens of the water, huge species of cuttle-fish, &c. After these we come next in order to the fossils of gigantic birds, as in the Bible—*And fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

See how exactly the correspondence between science and Divine revelation is here maintained. Geology says that the first kind of animal life was that of the water, and consisted of gigantic creatures now extinct, and that then followed different varieties of birds. The Bible says:—*And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind.* The coincidence speaks for itself.

But to go still further:—*And God said, Let the earth bring forth the*

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living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind. Once more geology is with the Bible, for it is undisputed that quadrupeds were the next inhabitants of the earth.

And then, last of all, in the uppermost deposits of the earth's surface, we come to traces of man, God's crowning work in the world. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*

The correspondence between the chain of events in the creation of the earth as set forth in the first chapter of the Bible, and the same series as deduced by geology, is complete: first the waters, next the dry land, then the vegetable world, then the fishes, then the birds, then the animals, and, lastly, man, after God's own image. It is grand, it is glorious to think that man has been allowed by his own labours and researches to arrive at the same conclusions as are given in Divine revelation as to God's mode of procedure *in the beginning.*

H. E. Swain.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A QUESTION.

Dear Sir,—I have read with much interest the various articles on the Intermediate State that have appeared in your excellent Magazine; but there is one point which, so far as my memory serves, has not been touched, viz., our Lord's words in Matt. xii. 40: "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." This of course cannot mean His imprisonment in the tomb, for that was *two* nights; besides which a rock sepulchre would surely never be spoken of as "the heart of the earth." Compare this with the words of Jonah (ii. 6), "Thou hast brought up my life from the pit" (Margin); and with the passage in Numbers when speaking of Korah and his confederates it is said, "They and all that appertained unto them, went down alive into the pit." Do not these verses countenance the belief that Sheol or Hades is not, as some contend, a mere figure of speech, but a local habitation for the departed, and that it is the interior of the very earth which we inhabit?

Yours very sincerely,

William Macredie, J.P.

Melbourne.

ANSWER.

Sir,—I have never before heard it suggested that the "three days and three nights," of which St. Matthew here speaks, referred to any other than the period of time during which our Lord lay in His grave. The simple solution of Mr. Macredie's difficulty lies in the fact that the Jews counted any portion, however small, of a day as an entire day of twenty-four hours. Dean Alford, in his note on the above passage, says, "If it be necessary to make good the three days and nights during which our Lord was in the heart of the earth, it must be done by having recourse to the Jewish method of computing time. In the Jerusalem Talmud

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(cited by Lightfoot) it is said "that a day and night together make up a צרנה (α νυχήμερον)* and that any part of such a period is counted as the whole." See Gen. xi. 13-20; 1 Sam. xxx. 12, 13; 2 Chron. x. 5-12; Hos. vi. 2 (Alford's Greek Testament). The expression merely shows us that our Lord used the Jewish idiom, and that the apostle has faithfully given us his exact phrase. Mr. Macredie's difficulty could not occur to one used to the Jewish computation of time.

As to his observation that the apostle cannot refer to our Lord's burial, since the expression "heart of the earth" cannot signify a "rock sepulchre," reference to the passages he has referred shows us that Hades, or Sheol, means a place by no means so far within the earth as Mr. M. supposes. In Numbers xvi. 30-32, we are told that Dathan and Abiram and their families went down alive into Hades. The Hebrew word for "pit" here is Sheol, in the Greek it is Hades. Now no one supposes that the earth opened out to its centre, but merely that an ordinary chasm, such as is produced by an earthquake, swallowed up the rebellious Israelites. If the earth had opened out to its heart or centre it would have swallowed up the whole camp of Israel, or, for that matter, the whole peninsula of Sinai. The chasm was such as is constantly produced by earthquakes, sufficient to swallow up a house or houses, but by no means extending to the heart or centre of the earth. If such a chasm is called Hades in Numbers xvi. 30, there can be no possible objection to our supposing that our Lord's burial in his rocky tomb may also refer to his location in Hades.

The same may be seen with even greater force from reference to the case of Jonah. Jonah was not actually under the earth at all. He was only under the waves. He was therefore very far indeed removed from the centre of the earth. Yet he calls the place of his imprisonment "the belly of hell," i.e., of Sheol or Hades. We thus see that in the Holy Scriptures Hades is not supposed to refer to a locality at all so far within the earth as Mr. M. supposes, and that according to its usage our Lord's body may have been in Hades though it was not farther within the earth than the recess of a rocky tomb. HENRY CONSTABLE.

* [A day and night. 2 Cor. xi. 25.—Editor.]

LIGHT IN GOSHEN.

DEAR SIR,—I have studied the great truths but for four years, in defence of which you have spent the better part of your life. I am happy to say that during these four years I have picked up eight vols. of the RAINBOW, and as opportunity permits I will get the other vols., till I am the happy possessor of them all.

If you can throw any light on Exod. x. 21-23, I shall be glad indeed. Was there a double miracle wrought in the case of the Hebrews? The Egyptians were in thick darkness, "but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." Goshen was a district of Egypt. From the English reading of verse 23, do you think there was light outside of the dwellings of Israel's children?

In closing the "Astronomical discussion," in 1875, you say, "The truth, wherever it may be found, will be clearly established some day."

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Are there any signs of the "establishment of the truth" in regard to Astronomy?

Astronomers, like theologians, won't move till they are pushed. You, above many, know how hard it has been to move theologians. The RAINBOW has been the honoured instrument in opening the eyes of many humble believers, and not a few of the mighty.

Has the time not yet come when God's truth about astronomy may be fully and fearlessly set forth in all its simplicity and grandeur, so that those men may be silenced who teach that the earth is revolving round the sun at seventeen miles a second, when the Creator of the world has so clearly stated that it does not move!

Yours truly,

Salford. T. M. P.

[Ex. x. 21-23 is not to be accounted for by any astronomical "theory." It is one of the "wonders" by which the God of Israel "put a division" between His people and the people of Pharaoh. (See viii. 22, 23; xi. 7; xiv. 19, 20.) The Biblical account of Creation is to us Divinely "scientific." No baseless theory will ever shake our belief in the Word of God. To tell us that this vast world is whirled through space one hundred and twenty times faster than a discharged cannon-ball, or four times quicker than a flash of lightning, is simply AWFUL!

Let intelligent men just devote ten minutes' *serious thought to it, and all that it involves*, and they must reject it as a shameless imposture. We found the other day that the famous John Owen—as well as many of his brethren—held the Copernican theory to be unscriptural and irrational, which most assuredly it is.]

MR. UNDERHILL'S LETTER.

SIR,—I shall be leaving England a few days hence, and have had too much to do to permit of my just now giving Mr. Underhill the Scripture proofs he very properly asks me for. I shall be very happy to write to you again soon after my arrival in the land whither I am going. Meanwhile, with reference to paragraph 4 of Mr. Underhill's letter, I wish to say that as I did not make use of the phrase *secret rapture*, I shall not concern myself to reply to that part of your esteemed correspondent's communication.

Yours very truly,

Ealing, 8th May. G. J. v. S.

LITERATURE.

The Fulfilment of the Apocalypse. The First and Final Acts. Showing when the Present Age will cease and a New Age begin. London: Elliot Stock. (Price Sixpence.)

OUR esteemed friend Mr. Starkey has published in this pamphlet his recent papers in the RAINBOW. In the preface he assigns some further reasons for the view he takes. Many brethren take a different view. It is well known to our readers that we give a fair field for discussion, in a Christian spirit, and do not presume to make our convictions a test for others. We have

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always wished intelligent men to judge for themselves in the light of that Word which is the rule of judgment for us all. To prevent misunderstanding, however, regarding ourselves, we may repeat, what we have said more than once, that, *to us*, the Apocalypse is *entirely* future. It is "the revelation of JESUS CHRIST," and when it *begins* to be fulfilled HE "comes *quickly*." We may be wrong, but our readers know that we do not conceal conviction; and we are sure that if they suspected us of that we should lose their confidence, which it has been our rich privilege to enjoy for many years. We add, what must have struck others, that, apart from the question of interpretation, there are beautiful and ingenious things on practical piety in Mr. Starkey's pamphlet, which no one can read without feeling the necessity of personal watchfulness and heart-searching.

NOTICES.

"F. D." writes: "Thank the LORD, the RAINBOW lives on! I have taken it from the beginning, and feel that I have grown, mentally, with its growth. I look for its appearance monthly with growing gladness."

"C. L. T."—It is manifestly wrong to speak of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as "Jews." Judah was the fourth son of Jacob by Leah. The descendants of *Judah* are "Jews." Strictly speaking, the name is appropriate only to the subjects of the kingdom of the two tribes after the separation of the ten tribes, B.C. 975. And it is equally wrong to call the descendants of the ten tribes Jews. It is important to be exact in these matters.

"W. BROWN."—Prejudice shuts out many persons from light and truth that would have made them glad. It is an adversary against which all should watch who wish to grow in Christian wisdom, and to cultivate Christian charity. It is a murderer of character; for it has often wickedly blackened the reputation of holy and noble men.

"A. T."—The words are William Cowper's, in "Truth":

> "Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
> Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan!
> No meretricious graces to beguile,
> No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;
> From ostentation, as from weakness free,
> It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
> Majestic in its own simplicity.
> Inscribed above the portal, from afar,
> Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
> Legible only by the light they give,
> Stand the soul-quickening words—BELIEVE AND LIVE."

"LOUIS."—Speak out, gently but firmly, the truth that is in you! Open, ingenuous men secure respect. Time-servers who are always glancing at the steeple to see how the wind blows before they open their

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lips, are never held in honour. "Will it pay?" is a shameful question when Heaven's truth is involved! Sooner or later, Truth always "pays" her soldiers nobly, though for a time their faith and courage may be severely tested. This is the way she makes her heroes. (2 Tim. ii. 3.)

"P. OWEN."—To pray for the "extension of the Redeemer's kingdom" is usual in prayer meetings. It would, of course, indicate a better knowledge of Scripture to pray that it might come; for that which has as yet no existence cannot be extended. But people have been so long taught that the Church is the kingdom that we cannot expect clearer vision until they are better instructed.

"J. G." writes: "I hope you will be encouraged and sustained in your great work, in which you have so long nobly and honourably contended for the truth." We hope so too, if it be the MASTER'S will; and we thank Him that, with all its difficulties, that work has not been in vain. Many, very many, have been delivered from an oppressive falsehood, and are rejoicing in the light and love of Divine truth. A dark superstition has been driven from perplexed Christian hearts by the bright beams of inspiration, and God, in consequence, is lovingly praised. This result is worth labouring for. In such a result, we and our fellow-workers are richly repaid, far more than repaid. Let us work heartily a little longer. In due time we shall reap if we faint not.

"*Nature's Praise.*" New Sacred Song. Words by the Rev. WILLIAM LEASK, D.D. Music by HOWARD LEASK. Sung by Miss COYTE TURNER.

CREATION sings its Maker's praise
At dawn, at noon, at night:
In songs sublime, or gentler lays,
His wisdom, goodness, might.

The rustling leaf, the fragrant flower,
The fields of yellow gold,
The dew, the stream, the fruitful shower,
The Father's thoughts unfold.

A splendid temple, filled with song,
Creation yet shall be;
When glorious music shall prolong
His fame on land and sea.

We wait, in hope, the morning star
Of that auspicious time;
When sorrow shall be left afar,
And joy fill every clime.

Copies may be obtained, post free, from Mr. Howard Leask, 34, Sandringham Road, West Hackney; or, Messrs. Metzler and Co., 37, Great Marlborough Street, W. Price 2s. nett.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

JULY, 1881.

THE ULTIMATE REASON.

THAT is a grand revelation which tells us that "the good pleasure of His will" is God's rule of action. In purposing, and executing, this is His sublime LAW. That He is a law to Himself is manifest, for He takes no counsel with His creatures, and yet He acts through the ages with unceasing energy. There was an ideal universe in "the mind of the Lord" before the first of the ages began, and towards its realisation as an accomplished fact all things tend with infallible certainty. It must be so. "The immutability of His counsel" must be accepted as absolute. The idea of change in God would instantly destroy confidence in Him. We could not rest upon a promise if the Promiser were not known to be faithful. But with "the Father of the lights of heaven there is no variableness or shadow of turning."

We see things in the world continually which appear to contradict the doctrine of a divinely majestic movement, unchecked and uninterrupted, towards a glorious issue. But we are taken up by phenomena, troubled by appearances, as if these in any way affected "the eternal purpose of God which He hath purposed in Himself." As the often-changing winds that blow and the ever-changing clouds that float over the earth do not affect its stability as the immovable centre of God's operations, so the thunders of war and the political and polemical storms that rend nations and churches asunder, are unable to touch the settled purpose of the Most High, or to check the invisible force by which it is carried on. What is there to prevent the final accomplishment of the eternal purpose? Contingency? The idea conveyed by this word is surely inadmissible in the case of Omniscience. He who sees the end from the beginning, and every possibility that may spring into active opposition to His will between the beginning and the end, cannot be taken by surprise. The unforeseen is common to men: it is wholly illogical in relation to God. And if He foresaw the hostility of rebellious princes to a king whom He intended to place in un-

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bounded authority at a time known only to Himself, the resources of His wisdom could easily find the way to render that hostility useless, without interfering with the free agency which is the basis of responsibility. Hence in relation to this great matter He instructed one of His prophets to say: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." But let us quote the Psalm, so grand in its assurance of the unalterable decree, and so forcible in its challenge to the kings of the earth:—

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Psa. ii.).

True, we see not yet all things put under man, as the eighth Psalm prophesies; but an Apostle refers to it, and finds the assurance of fulfilment in the loving Saviour, the true Man, the Second Adam. Let us first read the prophecy of dominion, and then the key to its meaning.

1. THE PROPHECY:—

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained: What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, that Thou visitest Him? For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned Him with glory and honour. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!" (Psa. viii.).

2. THE KEY:—

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For

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if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will? For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou visitest Him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. ii. 1-9).

Nothing can prevent the accomplishment of God's glorious will. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psa. xxxiii. 10, 11). "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isa. xlvi. 10). Here we rest with a deeply grateful Amen!

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

Phil. i. 23.

(*Continued from page* 218.)

I SUPPOSE we may take Justin Martyr, a learned and devout father of the second century, as well qualified to give us a true opinion of the general sentiment of his time upon this question. He speaks thus in his dialogue with the Jew Trypho: "If you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this truth, and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to heaven; *do not imagine that they are Christians*" (Justin Martyr. Dialogue with Trypho, chap. lxxx. Ante-Nicene Christian Library. Edited by Rev. A. Roberts, D.D.).

This testimony of Justin Martyr is very well worth consideration. It tells us that in his time the idea that the souls of the departed were in heaven, where Christ was, was not held by any one who deserved the name of Christian: that if it were held by

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anyone claiming that name it was a proof that his claim was false: that the assertion that the souls of the departed were in heaven was equivalent to the denial of the resurrection of the dead. Let our opponents weigh well this testimony of Justin Martyr.

To but one other witness on this subject will I now appeal. Episcopius was one of the most learned Dutch divines of the seventeenth century. He was very well acquainted with the writings of the Greek Fathers. What does he tell us of their views upon this question? "The Greek Fathers," he says, "were *unanimous* in their opinion that the souls of the saints did not enjoy the vision of God, nor were admitted into the fruition of glory, *till the resurrection*" ("View of the Intermediate State." London: F. Field, 1765, p. 32).

From these two testimonies we may gather this as the consenting view of the early Fathers of the Church, namely, that the idea that the departed were with Christ in heaven in a state of glory, was not held by them; but was, on the contrary, rejected by them as rank heresy. What are now esteemed orthodox views would, in the early Church, have been universally stigmatised as heretical.

From the opinions of men entitled to the highest respect we turn to Scripture to see how far they are carried out by the ultimate standard of all religious truth—the Word of God. We shall here find that the view usually held of the intermediate state, viz., as a state of glory and knowledge in heaven with Christ, is utterly rejected.

The view we are here opposed to represents the departed as not truly dead, but as being really and truly alive! This is certainly opposed to the general tenor of Scripture. Death is ever in it put into the strongest contrast with life (Deut. xxx. 15). The two states are perfect opposites, so that it is impossible for a man to be in both of them at the same time. But in which of them does Scripture represent the departed as being until the day of resurrection? In the state of death. It is quite needless to quote passages to this effect. The departed of long ago are spoken of as the "long dead." Our Lord affirms of all generations of Israel before his time that they "are dead;" of every believer in Jesus from the beginning to the close of time the heavenly voice in Revelation pronounces that they are "dead" while in the separate state. And St. Paul expressly tells us that the power of death is not subdued over them until the resurrection day (Psa. cxliii. 3; John vi. 49; Rev. xiv. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54; Acts ii. 31). The overpowering testimony of Scripture teaches of all the departed, of whatever character, that they are dead and not living.

And what does it tell us of the knowledge acquired by the departed by their death? If death has elevated them to heaven and left them possessed of life it must indeed, as so many say, have imparted to them an amount of knowledge of which we can

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now have no conception. Their state, in this respect, must be such as the apostle speaks of to the Corinthians: "They know as they are known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). But is this the account which Scripture gives? The unhappy spiritualist pretends to bring them before us to tell us things we know not; but those who were brought back from the state of death to life by resurrection, of whom we have several accounts in Scripture, never told one iota to those whom they met again in life. Neither the son of the woman of Zarephath, nor the child of the wealthy Shunamite, nor Jairus's daughter, nor the son of the widow of Nain, nor the brother of Mary and friend of Christ, ever told one little secret of that new land of life into which, according to the opinion of so many, they were introduced at and by death with mental powers vastly superior to what they had possessed in the mortal life. (1 Kings xvii. 22; 2 Kings iv. 35; Mark v. 22; Luke vii. 15; John xi. 44.) It is easy to know why. Scripture tells us that so far from the state of the departed being a state of greater knowledge than they now possess, it is a state in which they have no knowledge at all. What an account Solomon gives us of this state in the Book of Ecclesiastes, which is just as much an inspired book as any other in Scripture! "The living," he tells us, "know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything." And that which the wisest of the Jewish kings uttered was only what he was taught in the inspired Book of Psalms, where we are told that man's "thoughts perish" in the very day when his "breath goeth forth" (Eccles. ix. 5; iii. 19; Psa. cxlvi. 4). What becomes of the vaunted knowledge of the dead when we ask the oracles of God. It vanishes away. We living men are but children in knowledge; but, children though we be in regard to that which may be known of the works of God, we are masters of all science in comparison with the dead.

The view we oppose represents the souls of the departed as in heaven during the intermediate state. But Scripture represents them as, during that state, in Hades, which certainly is not the heaven where Christ is, whatever locality or condition we suppose it to be. Our Lord's soul, we know from Scripture, was in Hades during his time of death, and taken out of it when He rose (Acts ii. 27). The believer in death is like his Lord, and therefore his soul likewise is in Hades until the resurrection (Rom. vi. 5). This is also expressly told us by St. Paul in the 1 Corinthians xv., where, on the day of resurrection, but not before it, shall be said by every believer, "O, death, where is thy sting? O, Hades, where is thy victory?" (ver. 55). The word translated "grave" in our Authorised Version, is in the Greek, "Hades," and a comparison of the fifty-fifth verse with the fifty-fourth shows us that it is not until the resurrection that the power of death and Hades is broken in the case of a single departed saint. Their souls are therefore in Hades, not in heaven, in the intermediate state.

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Again, the view we oppose represents the departed as being during that state reigning in heavenly glory. But where does Scripture represent the saints to have attained to their glory and their crown? Let us hear the Apostle Paul on this subject. In his Epistle to the Colossians, he tells them that it was when Christ should come again: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, *then* shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (iii. 4). And when does he tell us that he himself expected this glorious crown? When about to be brought before Nero the second time, and knowing that he should then be condemned to die, he says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that* day: and not to me only, but unto all them also *that love His appearing*" (2 Tim. iv. 8). From these two places we learn the sentiments of St. Paul. He did not expect for himself or any of his fellow believers the crown of righteousness and glory in death. When a servant of God died, he judged this crown was "laid up" for him, not actually given. It was when the great day of the Second Advent dawned that he and the people of Christ were to wear their crown, and to be in glory.

Again, the view which we oppose represents the departed saint as having received the reward he looked forward to as the issue of his life of faith in this world. This is wholly different from the Scriptural account of the matter. If we will accept our Saviour's words, we will acknowledge that the reward or recompense of His faithful people is not bestowed during death but after death is over: to them He says, "Thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be *recompensed at the resurrection of the just*" (Luke xiv. 14). While the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expressly tells us of all the departed faithful before his time that not one of them had in death "received the promise" in reliance on which they had lived their life of faith (Heb. xi. 39). Of course, what was true of them was true of all who resembled them since in faith and obedience. That recompense and reward and promise which so many tell us is obtained by all believers while they are dead, is in holy Scripture represented as not obtained by a single one of them until resurrection.

Once more, the view we object to represents the people of God as being "with Christ" during the state of death. But Scripture, in very many places, tells us that it is at the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead that His people are "with Him." Thus our Lord in His last discourse with His apostles tells them that He will come again and receive them to Himself; *that where He is, there they may be also* (John xiv. 3). His return to earth was, in His view, essential to His people's being "with Him." It is at this very same time that St. Paul teaches the Thessalonian Christians that they are to be "with Christ." They are to meet the Lord in the air, and "*so* to be ever with the Lord." (1 Thess.

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iv. 17). According to the apostle, this, not death, was to bring believers into the presence of Christ. So, too, it is in the teaching of St. John (1 John iii. 2). "We know," says that apostle, "that *when He shall appear* we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Not until His appearing, according to the teaching of the beloved apostle, shall His people see Him as He is now in heaven. And so the Old Testament teaches as the New. It was at resurrection that David expected to see his redeeming God: "As for me," he says, "I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, *when I awake*, with Thy likeness."

But the view that during the state of death, believers are with Christ and see Him, implies of necessity more than almost any, if any, of them will admit. According to the express teaching of St. John, the fact that a believer sees Christ, implies that He is also changed into His likeness. "When He shall appear," St. John tells us in a passage already quoted, "*we shall be like Him.*" And why shall we be like Him? "*Because we shall see Him as He is*" (1 John iii. 2). Everyone who sees Christ is necessarily, according to John, like to Christ. This implies the *resurrection* of the body in its glorified state! No one of His people could see Christ without being thereby made like Him, and therefore as having been raised up in the resurrection of life. Very few, however, if indeed a single one, of our opponents admit this, and yet it would be an inevitable consequence if, during death, believers were "present with the Lord."

If, then, we are prepared to accept the general teaching of Scripture, we must reject altogether the view of our opponents that the being "with Christ," of which the apostle speaks in Philippians i. 23, is *during* the state of death. We must allow it to be *after* death, *i.e.*, after the resurrection and the second coming of the Lord. With this view all Scripture agrees. Then it is that God's word represents believers as alive, as possessed of wondrous knowledge, as seeing their Lord and receiving from Him the crown of righteousness and glory.

But then, it will be said, the apostle in the passage from Philippians closely connects departing, or dying, with being with Christ—in fact, speaks of them as being in his judgment synchronical. He certainly does seem so to do. Can we account for this on any principle consonant with the general doctrine of Scripture, and, in especial, with the manner and teaching of the Apostle Paul? We can.

Before proceeding, however, to do so, we would remark that any theory of the intermediate state as a state of consciousness, and which does not represent it also as a state of glory in the personal presence of Christ, fails altogether to carry out that view of the passage which represents death as synchronical with being "with Christ." While the general view of our opponents represents the intermediate state of believers as spent in the presence of Christ,

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and as being the condition of glory, there are very many of the ablest advocates of the consciousness of that state who altogether reject the view that believers are during it with Christ in heaven. They place them in Hades, or Paradise, or somewhere else, but not in heaven with Christ. How does this view suit the aspect of the passage under consideration, which brings close together in regard of time the believer's death and his presence with Christ? It is absolutely irreconcilable. If Abel has been alive ever since the day of his murder, and not with Christ in heaven, the interval of time since his murder must appear to him a very long and tedious one. We could not say that to depart and to be with Christ, while different events, were also in any sense synchronical.

But St. Paul's doctrine of the intermediate state which, while it represents the departure of the believer as being indeed a different thing from his being with the Lord, also represents those two differing things as practically synchronical. It is his doctrine that death is a sleep. We need not enter particularly into an examination of his writings to establish this. It is too oft repeated to be denied. (1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 14; v. 10.) In this he only agrees with the general teaching of the Scriptures.

Now how does the theory of the intermediate state, as a state of sleep, synchronise two events, very different in nature from one another, and also separated in the case of many who undergo them both by a long interval of actual years? It does so in this manner:—*Sleep knows nothing of time.* Hence death and being with Christ are to the sleeper synchronical events.

We might refer to very many men of commanding intellect in proof that such a representation of the matter is only most rational. We will, however, now content ourselves with a few quotations from a very able writer, not very generally known among us, Dr. Courtenay, late Bishop of Kingston, Jamaica. "Man, say the Scriptures of the Old Testament, is not (during death) in a region of glory, but in a land of darkness; not in the presence of God, but hidden in secret chambers; not employed in glorifying Him, but buried in sleep; not hoping for His truth, but in a land where all things are forgotten." "Throughout the apostolical epistles, and in more places than can be referred to in these pages, the interval between this life and the next, between this world and the world to come, is passed over as if it were nothing." "The interval between the putting off the one body and assuming the other, between the sowing of the seed and the rising of the new creature, is passed over as if it were nothing." "*The interval will not be felt; no train of thought will disturb the deep sleep of the dead, sickening the soul with hope deferred:* but they shall find that Scripture realised to them, 'it is appointed unto men once to die—and after this, the judgment.'" ("The Future States." By Reginald Courtenay, D.D., Lord Bishop of Kingston. London, 1857. Pp. 258, 266, 277.)

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Having seen that according to the statements of St. Paul the intermediate state was to be regarded as a sleep, and that the very notion of deep unbroken sleep annihilates to the sleeper its duration, and consequently we are fully justified in supposing that in Phil. i. 23, he joins together as though synchronical for the sleeping, two events consciously separated in time to waking men, we now proceed to inquire whether we have in other parts of the apostle's writings an example or examples of his doing that which we here suppose him to have done, namely, speak of two events, undoubtedly separated from each other in regard of time, and undoubtedly different from each other in character, as synchronical to those who are dead. We do not hesitate to say that beyond any question we have an example of this in a very parallel passage to Phil. iii. 23, viz., in 2 Cor. v. 1-3.

No one will dispute that the death of a believer is a very different thing from his resurrection, or that between the death of each believer and his resurrection there is interposed some interval of real time. Between the death of those who die immediately before the second advent there will be real time, though scarcely perceptible: between the death of Abel and his resurrection there will have been interposed, at the least, an interval of some six thousand years.

Now in this passage from 2 Cor. v. 1–3, St. Paul speaks of these two events, death and resurrection. He speaks of death under the phrase of our "earthly house of this tabernacle" being "dissolved:" he speaks of resurrection under the phrase of our having "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and being "clothed upon." No one disputes that the former phrase points to the believer's death, and we need therefore only say a few words of the latter phrase.

That the apostle means by the "building of God" a body, is plain by its contrast with "the house of this tabernacle," which is our present earthly body. And that it is of the eternal glorified body of resurrection that he speaks appears from the description of it, which is applicable to nothing else. "A building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," if spoken of man's body, can only refer to the glorified body of resurrection with those who hold such a resurrection at all. It perfectly agrees with this: it agrees with nothing else.

We will now proceed to give a few passages from writers who, while they do not agree at all with us in our view of human nature, and therefore of the intermediate state, and who would therefore be inclined, if they could, to interpret such places as 2 Cor. v. 1–3 of the intermediate state, yet cannot but see that the "building of God" in this place can only refer to the body of resurrection. Tertullian, a Christian father of the second century, speaks of this view as though it were not only his own opinion, but the only opinion that could possibly be held. In his treatise on the

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"Resurrection," commenting on this passage, he says that when St. Paul here "contrasted the recompense of the reward, he did not deny the flesh's restoration; since the recompense is due to the same substance to which the dissolution is attributed—*that is, of course, the flesh.* Because, however, he had called the flesh '*a house*,' he wished elegantly to use the same term in his comparison of *the ultimate reward; promising to the very house which is being dissolved through suffering a better house through the resurrection.*" Again, in his book against Marcion, Tertullian comments at length upon this passage. He is contrasting those who shall be alive when the Lord comes with those believers who died before that event in the consequences of that coming to each of these divisions of the Church of God. He says that "whilst these (*i.e., the living saints*) shall put on over their changed body this heavenly raiment, the dead also shall for their part recover their body, over which they too have a supervesture put on, even the incorruption of heaven; because of these it was that he said: 'this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality' . . . . It was accordingly not without good reason that he described them as 'not wishing indeed to be unclothed,' but 'to be clothed upon;' in other words, as wishing not to undergo death, but to be surprised with life, 'that *this mortal body might be swallowed up of life*' *by being rescued from death in the supervesture of its changed state.*" (Tertullian, "On Resurrection," chap. xli. Against Marcion, chap. xii.) Such was Tertullian's opinion of this passage, as it was the common opinion of the Church of his day.

I will next refer to the comment of Dr. Bloomfield in his "Notes on the New Testament" on this place. Whatever may be thought of the authority of Bloomfield as a critic, there is no doubt that he was well acquainted with the general view of commentators and critics. And yet he speaks of this passage as, with scarce any doubt, held generally to refer to the resurrection. He says that the believer's "wish is not so much to put off this body, and thereby be rid of those evils; but rather *to be clothed upon with; i.e., put on a celestial body.*" "It should seem," he adds, "as Mr. Scott says, that "the apostle did not mean to determine anything concerning the manner, as to *external* circumstances, in *which the body subsists after the resurrection.*" Bloomfield then refers to several of the old fathers of the Church as holding this view. (Bloomfield, "Greek Testament," *in loco.*)

Bearing in mind then that the apostle speaks in this place of two events, very different in character, and separated from each other by an interval of time, viz., the believer's death and the believer's resurrection, we now ask how does he speak of them? He speaks of them as though they were synchronical, just as in Phil. i. 23 he spoke in this way of the believer's departure and his being with Christ. His words are "we know that if our earthly house of this

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tabernacle were dissolved, *we have* a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He places no interval of time between these two events. The resurrection body is represented as possessed when the mortal body of this life is dissolved in death. And thus we show that it is in accordance with St. Paul's mode of thought to speak of two events, such as death and resurrection, as being synchronical, because the interval between them was unfelt by their subject, and remove an objection which might be made to our view of Phil. i. 23.

If death and resurrection are spoken of by the apostle as synchronical in 2 Cor. v. 1-3, though a real interval occur between them, the believer's death and his being present with Christ may also be spoken of by him as synchronical when the very same interval occurs between them too. The passage from Philippians means simply this, that while St. Paul for the sake of the Philippians would prefer to live, for himself he would prefer the quiet sleep of the grave to his restless persecuted life, knowing this, that without any apparent waiting by him it would be broken as in a moment by that glorious resurrection which would introduce him into the immediate presence of Christ. And thus we remove the very strongest text which is advanced for the consciousness of the believer in the state of death. His being with Christ is different from his departure both in nature and in time, but it is spoken of as synchronical because to him there is no apparent interval whatsoever. He sleeps! As in a moment, he wakes up to be for ever with the Lord!

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. VI.

Childhood in Nazareth.

THE most important part of our Lord's life—that which, his death excepted, entered most into the work He accomplished for us, and which made Him the Christ of the Gospels, is just that of which we have no record. It is so with the lives of all men that have had biographers. The most powerful formative influences are not the things which caused their lives to be written, rather they are obscure matters of very private knowledge, which, taken apart from their issues in the public character and action subsequently manifested, possess neither interest nor importance. Importance, that is, for historians, for nothing can exceed the importance of all personal experiences to all men in view of the life to come.

Just to take two hypothetical instances from the lives of men who felt deeply. Who can doubt that the essays and theology of John Foster—the most distinctive portions of them—arose from

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his early experiences as a weaver, and that portion of his history which is only glanced at by his biographer, viz., when having resigned the pastorate of the church in Swift's Alley, Dublin, he attempted a school, and joined the "Sons of Brutus." Similarly we may conjecture that the man James Hinton was made in the woollen-draper's establishment in Shoreditch. The period of his successful career as a dentist appears to have been a blank in his intellectual and spiritual development. His soul slept—but at Shoreditch his spirit was being ploughed up, and he learned to resent hotly the dictum of cold, respectable female nature—"Humanity is interesting in the abstract, but in the concrete!"

We say then that Nazareth was the womb of the Christ of history. From Nazareth Jesus stepped forth upon His theatre of action "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"—his visage marred more than any man. It was there, in the home of His infancy, in the subjection of His youth, in the labour of His manhood, that the largest and hardest portion of His work for our redemption was triumphantly accomplished. Had He failed He had missed the crown of His ministry. His summons to that and the witness from heaven at His baptism attest the perfection of His thirty years' probation. To conceive of His public life as a period of suffering is surely a great mistake. It is true the shadow of the cross fell upon it, and consciously each day He drew nearer the climax of human agony. True also that He suffered acutely from the intensity and breadth of His sympathy and from His inevitable loneliness. But those years were a draught of joy such as no son of man either before or since has tasted. From being cramped within the narrowest, He now entered upon the widest sphere. His exquisite human organisation was played upon by the varied landscape of mountainous Palestine, which He traversed many times in all seasons of the year. He exchanged the lonely hills for the buoyant waves of Geneseret, and after penetrating the beauty of desert flowers, resumed in the city's throng His infinitely interesting reading of human hearts. All grades, all orders, all varieties of men drew towards Him; even as the living creatures came to Adam to be named, Christ named the species that passed before Him. As moved by a fatal fascination, those confidently approached who should have hid themselves, He branded them, and they slunk away. But He lifted up the head of the lowly, and His word conferred value upon the scum of society. It was impossible to say whether town or country charmed Him most. From distant peregrinations he was always returning to Jerusalem, and when He entered it, He stirred it like a cauldron. Evening saw Him linger with the lingering shadows about the temple, and ere long escape to the dead stillness of Bethany.

But it was not the variety, the excitement, the surpassing interest and power of every moment of His existence that constituted

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its chief charm. It was the Royal largess of truth and bounty by which His progress was attended. It was the human hearts He won. It was the Divine creations that He daily made. It was the Father within Him. As He walked He scattered pearls of truth —a few have been preserved for us—and if we mourn the multitude that are lost, how know we but that every great saying of poet, philosopher, or preacher since, is not really one of Christ's lost words come back to us? He attracted to Himself an enthusiastic little flock who were ready to follow Him to death. He alternated discourses upon the kingdom of God, with miracles which foreshadowed that kingdom upon earth. Not a day but He had delivered some from evil, conferred some temporal felicity, or imparted some heavenly treasure.

New thousands blessed His name, as time after time He came into their regions, and He was able to read in their hearts more gratitude than ever they could utter. If poets, painters, and sculptors have been thrilled over their own creations, what terms can define that joy which the Saviour felt when out of the crude clay of human souls He brought into existence vessels of transparent loveliness which caught and imprisoned rays from His own exceeding glory? He moved among men as a Divine Regenerator of their spiritual—their highest and essential being. He was blissfully conscious that He was the Redeemer of the world, and was laying the foundation of an everlasting kingdom. Can human life be imagined more brimful of magnificent felicities? The tremulous joys of it must have shaken the human tabernacle more than labours. May we not say that had not His goodness compassed His malicious end, His own joy, the complement of His goodness, would have burst His heart? And will not every one who has attempted to follow Jesus in missionary "labours," so called, be ready to confess that there, and there alone, lies the very elixir of human life. Indeed, it is impossible for us to conceive of a bliss in heaven lacking this ingredient—the ingredient we mean of the satisfaction of sympathy and love in comforting, rescuing, and redeeming the suffering and the lost. We can joyfully believe in the happiness of angels, because they are now so occupied in reference to ourselves.

It is to Nazareth then we turn for the long suffering of our Saviour's life. Oh Nazareth! what spot upon earth can compare in interest with thee?

The Roman Church has not suffered us to forget, and we thank her for it, that Jesus was a child upon His mother's lap. No doubt highest wisdom appointed that Christ should step forth into daylight from the nook of Nazareth as if, like Gabriel, He had come from heaven full fledged and panoplied victor in a thousand fights down there, which have left their traces on his worn, seamed countenance. He came upon His generation like Melchizedek, without father, without mother, his lineage and antecedents unknown.

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Following a well-known law, He could do no mighty work among the purblind people amid which His infancy and youth were passed. But for a generation neither hard-hearted nor unbelieving, this infancy is exceeding precious. Infant maladies appear to threaten the career? Why not? Mary is forced to put the infant down and leave it in the care of guardian angels? Why not? Here in this "Madonna and child" we have set forth the immortal truth that man can minister to the happiness of God. He is not self-sufficient for His utmost blessedness. To that a multitude of the redeemed is necessary. It may suit theologians to descant on the Divine attributes so as to suggest that were the starry blaze of the winter sky, the token to us of burning worlds and souls writhing in unending agony, or were they the sparkle of God's dew of blessing upon His widespread universe, it were all one to Him. With the vesture of His creation, whether lost or saved, He could wrap Himself unmoved, even as the ermine of a king would not alter the beating of his heart. From such a ghastly speculation we turn to the Divine Child Jesus, tended by His mother, and if ever He smiled, smiling in her face. Know you not, oh, disciple! that every shadow of sin you allow to settle on your soul casts its reflex on the heart of God, and that every repentance and obedience clears His glory of its clouds. Your own happiness comes of the bright shining of His blessedness: when the cloud of your misconduct has departed. God's blessedness and yours are joined together and death cannot dissolve the union.

See now incarnate Deity fostered and nourished by humble human parents, repay those tender cares and multiplied self-denials by the loveliest type of infancy that ever blessed a household by its advent. How exquisite is the harmony of an infant child! Its foolishness, ignorance, and freedom, which would be offensive in older persons, are the very things which comport with the rounded softness of its frame and the smallness of its growth and strength. Its inexperience is delightful, its steady purpose to disbelieve in the harmfulness of any thing or person until bitterly undeceived, most touching. Its readiness to go with any one who looks kind and good, and to trust to any person, and to believe every word that is said to it, and to wonder why it is driven away from one child and has another, like a fine doll, forced upon it; all this is a daily sermon upon the kingdom of heaven to those who will read it.

We can scarcely think of the infancy of Jesus without a suggestion that while all the marks of the kingdom of heaven were there transcendantly; on the intellectual side the harmony must have appeared, even to casual observers, to have been disturbed. He was an infant like no other, and a child like no other, as He became a man—starlike, solitary. That fund of inward satisfaction upon which children feed, wanting no toys to interrupt their contemplative joys, Jesus possessed as no others in an equal degree. But if ordinary children appear sometimes gazing into infinitude,

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what must have been the profound far-off glances of that mysterious Babe to which Mary would draw the carpenter's attention by a touch, and both stand breathless. And when, conducted by the leaden-footed years beyond the stage of infancy and through bruises walking, He went with other children, although the sun rounding the heads and arms of all the group seemed to equalise their native worth, a second glance discovers a notable difference in one of them.

Is it some big baulk of pine or cedar from the Lebanon that the children watch being brought to the workshop of the craftsmen, or is it the gleam of Roman armour, attending the publican and aiding his extortions—absorbed and silent, seeming to know the heart of every trouble to which the other children are happily oblivious, the Holy Child again attracts the notice of the women, and is assigned an early grave. But it is when the publicans and the soldiers have gone their rounds—when under the forcing heat of burning wrong a harvest of lies has been begotten—when faces flushed and some in tears gather in groups to retail their grievances and denounce their oppressors—it is then that the child is seen mysteriously to smile, as there come to it dreams of Zaccheus and the far-off righteousness and peace that await His summons to appear.

Never was He seen so sad as when the daughters of Eve struggled and fought together with evil words and sometimes blows, about their turn to fill their water pots; but when a traveller waylaid and wounded by banditti, rolled the shingle before him in his steep and lame and painful descent to the village, a Divine satisfaction would light up His face to see those daughters of Eve all united again to render assistance to the sufferer, and in this busy good that came of evil was He not busy too?

HENRY DEACON.

REVISED VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IN the Revised Version of the New Testament, which has been just presented for acceptance to the English-speaking population of the world, we have, undoubtedly, a work of very great importance and of the deepest interest. From circumstances we have been unable to give to it that fulness of attention which we should have desired, and which perhaps at another time we may devote to it. We think, however, that we know enough of the work to be able to say that it has been undertaken and carried out with the most perfect honesty of intention to present to the world a true and accurate version of the writings of the New Testament. Throughout it, so far as we have been able to judge, there does not appear to have been the smallest bias in favour of any one school of thought or theology in the Christian world. The aim of the revisers appears to have been to present in the English tongue of

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our day the exact meaning which the sacred writers presented to the generation of their time in the language of Greece. We give them to the fullest extent the very high praise of an honest purpose honestly carried out.

The Authorised Version of the New Testament, which of course the Revised Version is intended to set aside as being better and truer, is very dear to us on many accounts. It has been in use for two hundred and seventy years, and so has the stamp of antiquity. It has been, throughout that long period, accepted among all Protestant communities and churches speaking the English tongue, who have appealed to it as their common standard of faith. In language of a beauty, a force and a simplicity which has never been surpassed, if it has ever been equalled, it has presented to us the message of God in the Gospel of His Son. It is indeed a gift of God in the seventeenth century for which we can never be sufficiently thankful, whether it be retained in general use as heretofore, or whether it be set aside for a version yet better.

Whatever be our opinion of the Revised Version as destined or deserving to take that place in Protestant Christendom which the Authorised Version has occupied for well nigh three centuries, we have no doubt whatever, and have for long been convinced, that a revision of the latter was plainly and most urgently required. The true state of the original Greek text was not when it was made ascertained at all so well by scholars as it is now. Of the three most ancient manuscripts, the Vatican had been jealously guarded from the common eye. The Alexandrian manuscript, now in the library of the British Museum, was not sent into England before the year 1628, several years after the publication of the Authorised Version. The Sinaitic manuscript was only discovered some years ago. Besides these oldest manuscripts of the New Testament in Greek, there are early versions of it, such especially as the Syriac and the Vulgate, which are undoubtedly of high authority in determining the original text, an authority which does not seem to have been sufficiently attended to by the translators of the Authorised Version. For these and other reasons, which it is needless here to specify, it is conceded by scholars that the Greek text, of which the Authorised Version is a translation, itself required a close and careful emendation.

Now it is quite evident that it is of primary importance to ascertain, as nearly as we can, the actual state of the Greek text as it was first written by the apostles and the other sacred writers. The discovery of, or the better acquaintance with, the oldest manuscripts, the truer appreciation of the authority of the most ancient versions, the better acquaintance with the rules of criticism possessed by modern scholarship, must therefore call for a revision of the Greek text itself.

But besides this, and apart altogether from the soundness or the unsoundness of the text, there are, in common opinion as well as in our own judgment, imperfections in the translation of the Authorised Version which imperatively call for a revision of it. We cannot in a brief article refer to these individually or even in classes. Several of them will appear later on, when we pass in review some of the alterations which have been made in the Revised Version. But there is, and has been for a considerable time, a prevailing impression that a revision of our Authorised Version was needed and called for. In the last century Dr. Newcome,

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Archbishop of Armagh, in his "Historical View" of English Biblical Translations, called for a revision of our present version by public authority. In our own day, the late lamented Dean Alford showed his deep sense of the necessity of such a step by his translation of the New Testament. Some of his alterations have been followed by our present revisers: there are others which, we regret to see, have not.

The efforts of the revisers have, of course, been made mainly and chiefly in these two directions: 1st, The establishment of, as nearly as possible, a perfect Greek text: 2nd, The true and accurate rendering of this text into the English tongue. Other matters also they have had in view, but into these we do not enter at present. It must suffice to call attention to the main objects which they had in view and which are of primary importance.

In the emendation of the Greek text it may be remarked that there is no attempt made to supply any passage that might be supposed to have been lost. No such attempt has ever been made, nor has it ever been supposed that any part of the New Testament has been lost to the Church. Some, indeed, have supposed a whole epistle of St. Paul, that to the Laodicean Church (Col. iv. 16) to have been lost; but this is a mistake; as that epistle is undoubtedly the one now erroneously addressed to the Ephesians. It is a cheering thought that no part of the writings inspired of God and directed to His Church has been allowed to be lost. It is in the substitution of one word for another, or in the omission of passages which have been improperly added to the sacred text, that the labours of our revisers in this respect are seen.

The first important omission from the received text occurs in Matt. i. 25, which is rendered—"and knew her not till she had brought forth *a son*: and he called his name Jesus." The words for "her firstborn" are plainly unjustified by authority. Their omission does not bear in any measure upon the point as to whether Mary had other sons than Jesus, as the words omitted here occur beyond question in the parallel passage in St. Luke ii. 7, from which they were probably introduced into Matthew's Gospel. Nor can Rome avail herself of the omission, as the words occur in the Vulgate, her own authorised version of the Scriptures.

The next important omission from the received text is that of the doxology from the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 13). There is, we believe, no question but that such an omission is required by all the rules of criticism, and therefore we rejoice that it has been made. It has no bearing upon any doctrine.

A more important omission in several points of view is made in John v. 4. Here the mention of the angel going down at a certain season into the pool of Bethesda is wholly abandoned. We think it is abandoned with reason. The giving up the passage relieves us of several difficulties. The reason for its insertion is not hard to find. There was some popular superstition about the angelic visitation which brought the sick to the spot. The omission of any reference to this superstition in the sacred writing is the tacit condemnation of it, while Jesus, by His wonderful work on one of its frequenters, shows himself the Great Angel of God.

Of course the famous passage of the three heavenly witnesses in

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1 John v. 7 is omitted. It has long been given up by scholars, though it has occasionally figured in sermons in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity. We do not want it. We are glad that it should disappear altogether from the scene. An over-zealous, but not over-scrupulous, friend of that doctrine inserted what St. John never wrote.

Another change has been made in 1 Tim. iii. 16, where "God" has been omitted, and "He who" has been substituted. We are pleased with the change, as there was no sufficient evidence for the first reading. It is a primary duty of faithful revision to see that no passage that was not in the original writings should continue in the text.

And for this reason we regret that our revisers have retained in the text of Ephesians i. 1, words which certainly have no right to be there. We refer to the words "*at Ephesus.*" They allow themselves in the margin, that "some very ancient authorities omit, *at Ephesus.*" We have the express testimony of Tertullian and Basil that these words were not in the ancient manuscripts. It is a great pity then that they should continue to be inserted, as their omission would lead to the speedy recognition of the important fact that the grand epistle usually ascribed to the Ephesians was in reality written by St. Paul to the Church of Laodicea (Col. iv. 16).

We now come to another very important passage, where we regret to find that the revisers feel themselves obliged to take an undecided course, to confess, in fact, that they find it out of their power to say whether it should continue in the text or be excluded from it. We refer to Mark xvi. 9-20. It is well known that the gravest doubts have been entertained by scholars as to the authenticity of this passage. The revisers in separating the paragraph from that which precedes it by an unusual space, and by calling attention, in the margin, to the fact that the two oldest Greek manuscripts as well as other authorities omit it altogether, very plainly intimate that its authenticity is doubted by them. Yet they still retain it in the text. We regret this much. In this passage, short as it is, is one indubitable contradiction of St. Luke's narrative. In Luke xxiv. 34 we are told that when the two disciples returned from Emmaus they found the apostles full of faith in the Lord's resurrection. Whereas, in Mark xvi. 13, we are told that when these returned and told their story the apostles refused to believe them. Surely an error of such a nature as this should decide the revisers in giving that submission to the oldest manuscripts which, even without it, they ought to manifest.

With these observations on the revision of the text of the New Testament, we turn for a short time to consider the important question of the manner in which its translation has been carried out.

The rules laid down by the revisers for their guidance in this matter are, in our judgment, most excellent. They are found in the Preface. Their fundamental principle is thus stated: "The character of the Revision was determined for us from the outset by the first rule, 'to introduce as few alterations as possible, consistently with faithfulness. Our task was revision, not re-translation" (Preface). We cannot think our revisers have carried out this admirable rule to the extent that they might and that they ought to have done. They have, not at all unfrequently, made alterations which were not called for, while they have

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frequently retained what should have been altered. Space will only permit us to refer very briefly to particulars.

We are, of course, far from saying that the revisers have not in very many—and those often very important—respects, improved the translation. They certainly have; and in these improvements they have given valuable aid to a more perfect revision of the Christian Scriptures than that they have produced.

In their substitution of words for others that have changed their sense, or become obsolete or almost obsolete in the course of time, they have frequently improved the Authorised Version. Thus, for "offend," we have in Matt. v. 29, "causeth to stumble;" for "strait," we have in Matt. viii. 13, "narrow;" for "take no thought" in Matt. vi. 25, we have "be not anxious," It is quite evident of how much importance alterations of this kind are. Expressions well understood at the time the Authorised Version was made, fail now to convey their old meaning, or actually convey an opposite one. We are encouraged in Scripture to take thought for the morrow; we are forbidden to be anxious.

An admirable rule with the revisers has been that, wherever the same Greek word occurs in any verse, or in its immediate context, the same English word should be given in translation. They justly complain of what we have often complained, namely, "*a studied variety of rendering* on the part of the translators of the Authorised Version (Preface). Thus, in Matt. xii. 5, 7, they put "guiltless" in both verses, because there is the same Greek word for both; and for the same reason they have in the oft-referred-to passage in Matt. xxv. 46, put "eternal" as the adjective connected both with "punishment" and "life." But as an example of this excellent principle, we would especially refer to their rendering of Matt. xvi. 25, 26. I have in my work on "Hades" (5th Ed. p. 93), called attention to the gross impropriety of using the word "life" in the 25th verse, and "soul" in the 26th, as the translation of the same Greek term. The revisers have seen this; and, in putting "life" as the translation throughout, have enabled every one to arrive at the true meaning of the passage.

The revisers have done wisely in regard of the very important word "hell." It is known to every scholar that there are *three* Greek words in the New Testament which are translated by the same word "hell." Hence inextricable confusion to the mere English reader. The revisers have in a measure remedied this. The Greek word gehenna very properly continues to be translated "hell," signifying the place of final punishment. The Greek word hades is rendered "hades," and so all may judge for themselves what hades is. We regret that they did not carry out their rule in 2 Peter vii. 4, where they have left "hell" as the translation of a Greek word wholly different from gehenna. We are glad, however, that they have informed English readers in the margin that the place which St. Peter referred to was "Tartarus."

The manner in which the coins mentioned in the New Testament have been translated has often caused us surprise and annoyance. The simple principle is to give the name of the coin referred to, and let readers find out its value in our money. Our revisers have, in part, acted on this principle in relation to the coins referred to in Matt. xvii. 24-27. They have rendered "tribute money" and "piece of money" by "half shekel"

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and "shekel," with direct and proper reference to Exod. xxx. 13. They would, however, have done better had they named the coins referred to, the Greek didrachma and stater. These can then be compared with the Hebrew coins. We are much surprised that they have made no attempt to clear up the confusion that arises from translating the Roman coin denarius by a "penny" (Matt. xviii. 28; xx. 2; xxii. 19). We remember how difficult it used to be for us to make our Sunday School scholars understand how a penny in Judea equalled eight pennies in England. But if they were told plainly that a denarius was the hire of a labouring man in Judea, and that it equalled about eightpence of English money, all this confusion would vanish.

We gladly notice several other decided improvements in the Revised Version. Thus, "and" for "notwithstanding" is such (Matt. ii. 22). So is "threshing floor" for "floor" (Matt. iii. 12); "wine-skins" for "bottles" (Matt. ix 17); "partings of the highways" for "highways" (Matt. xxii. 9); "I know nothing against myself" for "I know nothing by myself" (1 Cor. iv. 4); "divers portions" for "sundry times" (Heb. i. 1); "covenant" for "testament" (Matt. xxvi. 28). We would also note the translation of Matt. xv. 5, and Jude 7th verse, as clearing up places often hard to be understood. In the division of the text into paragraphs, still retaining for facility of reference the chapters and verses; in the change of Greek proper names for their corresponding form in Hebrew; for the marked tendency to understand the Greek psyche as simply animal life instead of a supposed immortal principle: for all these we thank the learned revisers.

But we would not be treating them fairly if we did not say that these are but samples of the numerous improvements which they have introduced, and for which we are under deep obligation to them.

What then, it may be asked, is our opinion of the probability of the success of this Revised Version? The revisers have aimed, we doubt not, at presenting a version of the New Testament which should, in the future, take the place which the Authorised Version has held for the last two hundred and seventy years. We do not think that they will succeed. We hoped in this version for something as nearly approaching perfection as it was possible for man to attain to. Looking at the representative character of the revisers, their true scholarship, and their undoubted honesty of purpose, we expected from their hands a version, not of course wholly free from blemishes, but on the whole, perfect and complete. The actual meets not our ideal. We cannot enter into particulars, but this is our impression. We have occasionally found no alteration where it seemed to be required; we have found some changes which, to us, seemed erroneous; we have found frequently changes made for mere change sake, and which are by no means improvements; we have, in the general character of the alterations, found a departure from that simplicity and beauty and felicity of expression which have endeared the Authorised Version to the ear, as its truths have endeared it to the heart. We regard the Revised Version as a most valuable addition to Christian literature; as a most important help to a perfect version; but not as the version which, in its present state, is to take the place which the Authorised Version occupies, as the standard reference for the Protestant Churches throughout the world.

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As an example of the infelicitous manner of the revisers as compared with the style of the Authorised Version, I point to the opening verses of Hebrews. On the one side is the revised, on the other the authorised version:

Heb. i. 1, 2. Revised Version.	Heb. i. 1. 2. Authorised Version.
God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son.	God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

Apart altogether from the alterations here made in sense, there is a great departure from the beauty and simplicity of the Authorised Version. I subjoin a version which alters the translation where it requires alteration, while it preserves the well-known and justly admired form of our authorised version:

Heb. i., 1, 2.—God, who in divers portions, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

Here we have made little change. The alteration from "times" to "portions" is imperatively called for by the original Greek. But with this exception, we have adhered exactly to the Authorised Version. Our revisers have, however, done much more than this. The form of the passage is altered, and also many of the words, without any necessity, and certainly with serious falling off in felicity of expression. And what we note here applies to many other places. Our revisers have presented to us a most valuable aid towards a perfect translation of the New Testament, but they have not given us a perfect version.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument Against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. V.

IN other passages, where it might have been employed, we observe "body" is omitted altogether, and words directly expressive of personality occur, as when we read, "Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan. xii. 2); "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life," &c. (John v. 28, 29); "The dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. iv. 16). And the reason why this simple, direct form of speech is adopted is, the Bible knows nothing of the parts of men held up for contemplation and faith by ordinary religious writers; it connects personality with the body of man, not in a sort of complimentary way, because it is the body in which a soul dwells or has had its residence, but for the reason that *man is a body*, and a corporealized

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being ever will appear, the body now being soul, and the soul body. And therefore we discover such forms of speech as these, taken at random from Holy Scripture: "Present your bodies"—that is, yourselves—"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1); "The offering of the body"—the person, the complete humanity—"of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. x. 10); "The tongue . . . defileth the whole body"—person, or man—(Jas. iii. 6); "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost"—that each of you is a temple of the Holy Ghost—(1 Cor. vi. 19); "The light of the body"—person—"is the eye: if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body"—person—"shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body"—person or being—"shall be full of darkness" (Matt. vi. 22, 23).

From this variety of evidence we gather the precious lesson that in the Sacred Oracles there is none of the language painfully common in these degenerate times, in which the body is spoken of disparagingly when it happens to be contrasted with the soul; in other words, there is no magnifying the awful nature of the soul by representing the body as merely a shell, an instrument, a frail tenement, and the like. The contrast is between what man is now and what he may rise to when the archangel's trumpet sounds. Here is the vile or humble mode of being; afterwards comes the glorious and enduring one, attained to by an incorruptible resurrection. And having discovered the style of Scripture, we are also warranted to affirm that by limiting the resurrection to body—that poor, insignificant envelope of man, or appendage to his soul, as current phraseology puts it—the glory of Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life" is darkened in total eclipse.

4th Objection.—The popular view leaves us unimpressed with the utility of the resurrection. Multitudes holding that man survives the spear-thrust of death, see nothing to be gained by a physical resurrection. Among such we may name Swedenborgians and Spiritualists; the former professing to be Christians, the latter, unhappily, deeming the essential tenets of our holy religion altogether unworthy of credence. Both parties hold man, so far as perception of his own existence and fitness for intellectual effort and enjoyment is concerned, to be quite unaffected by death; in truth, they affirm, like the bulk of Christians, that the man proper never enters the sepulchre at all, though differing from them in this, that the dead are dissevered from world matter and its conditions for ever at the moment of dissolution, as completely as the butterfly is done with the chrysalis shell or husk, in which for a period it was enclosed and held down to a degraded sphere of being. As a result, they can imagine no boon a resurrection is adequate to entail upon them; rather, indeed, supposing it would act as an embargo on their activity, and a drag on their mental operations. Not by way of approving their ideas is this account of them introduced, but to show that millions of our kind, and many of them gifted with remarkable intelligence, have declared themselves unable to detect any connection between a future life and a corporeal resurrection; holding that there is of verity another existence accorded to man without it, and which would be impaired and fettered by the alliance of matter with those ethereal substances, or principles, familiarly spoken of as souls and spirits.

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And *we* also find similar questions returning, for we have already glanced in the direction they point (see 4th on page 248), with unallayed pertinacity. What, in the circumstances, is to be harvested from a resurrection? What mighty advantage is it to confer on its subjects? "Equal to the angels" *without a resurrection*, what is it to accomplish on their behalf? What will a material envelope, a form, a case, a shell, an instrument, effect for those already at the summit of celestial privileges? We have a right to ask these incisive questions. Resurrection is not a pre-requisite to existence, and heavenly existence; departed souls are, as is confessed by multitudes of Christians, in existence, and in ecstatic existence, without it. Indispensable it is not to consciousness, for they possess exalted consciousness in its absence. All that is imaginable belongs to them, according to glowing pulpit delineations, of insight, and travel, and triumph, and love, and felicity; and what could matter, allied to them as of old, superinduce?

And yet the Bible places the utmost stress on the resurrection. All glory is associated with it. Enlightened hope turns to it as the unfailing solace amid the cares of earth, and in prospect of entering the land of shadows. The disparity between the language now common in devout circles and that abounding in the sacred chapters, when believers exultingly take up the theme of a resurrection at the pre-millennial coming of their Lord, is so vast that one is amazed why the conviction of something being wrong does not startle the ranks of orthodoxy like a sudden peal of thunder. The subject that elevated the Apostles to their sublimest periods, and the earlier professors of Christianity to their sweetest notes of jubilee, is now all but thrust into obscurity, and a heaven at death—the approach of the King of Terrors as a mighty benefactor, rather than the Advent of Him who is the Vanquisher of Hades—with crowns for the faithful, and unending bliss on the shores of immortality, occupy the tongues of preachers and the hymns of the sanctuary.

5th Objection.—The exposition in the *Notes* is open to the charge of representing (far be it from us to say by design) our Lord as treating the well-understood doctrine of the Sadducees *unfairly*; in fact, with substantially ignoring it, and putting an inaccurate version of their tenet in its room. We venture to build this grave indictment on the words which necessity requires us to transcribe anew:

"Yet God spake then"—at the bush—"as being still their God. They must, therefore, be still somewhere living; for God is not the God of the dead; i.e., it is absurd to say that God rules over those who are *extinct* or *annihilated*, but He is the God only of those who have existence."

The misrepresentation consists in this, that the Sadducees contended men were not merely, to use the strong language of our commentator, "extinct or annihilated," but in that condition FOR EVER, something entirely different. With the addition of the two words, "for ever," their doctrine rises properly into view, and against that, and *only* that, our Lord directs His Old Testament argument, as the guns of the artillery in battle are pointed at a fort.

In opposition to Mr. Barnes, we are prepared to maintain that what may be true, as the above extract avers, against the Sadducean doctrine of man's condition in death regarded as eternal in its duration, may *not* be true, should it have only a *limited* continuance. That is, it would be

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absurd to speak of God as still their God, if *the Patriarchs are dead for ever;* yet it might not be inappropriate language if they are dead in the distinct sense in which this Jewish sect regarded death, but *merely* for a certain *period*, longer or shorter as the case may be. In other words, the *temporary* extinction of consciousness cannot dissolve the relationship between God and His people, and between His people and Jehovah as their God.

To see some warrant for this, bring to recollection and meditate upon it, that for eight hours, on an average, during each twenty-four, Abraham, to single out for the present one of the worthies, was unconscious in sleep; but God did not then cease to be his God. At his bedside could not the Eternal announce, "I am the God of Abraham," even when the good man had no more recognition of the Supreme than if he had never been, or was never to serve Him as a worshipper again? During the third part of his daily existence, or, to widen it, during the third part of his life, the father of the Faithful was, when in natural repose, exactly as if he had gone out of being, so far as consciousness was concerned; and during all that time God was undeniably still his God.

But again, had he been for many days at a time in an insensible condition, say from fever, would not God have remained all the while his God? and at such a period would he not have been just as incapable of acknowledging the Divine authority, and reverently submitting to its requirements, as he would be rendered by becoming "extinct or annihilated"? And even in the circumstances imagined there would have been a tenderness and a truth in the words heard at the bush, had they been spoken over him while he lay tossing, as millions have tossed, in a state of absolute unconsciousness, produced by disease.

Now, that being itself can be suspended, as well as consciousness, surely no one will rashly venture to deny. That it could be restored after suspension may also readily be admitted without enclosing the impossible within the comprehensive range of Omnipotence. No contradiction is involved in the supposition that it may be rekindled. We are at perfect liberty to assert that even an Almighty fiat is unable to make an object black and white at the same time, a circle a square, water hot and cold, a man entirely alive and completely dead, at the same moment. Propositions of that kind are self-destructive. But no person need hesitate to concede that a man may pass out of existence and be rendered alive again. We do not assert at present, for there is no call to do it, that such an event ever happens, only that it *might* happen. In supposing as much, we do not exhibit the Almighty as accomplishing the impossible. There is neither unwisdom nor impiety in the thought; not the most distant approach to either. It is a perception on our part, an intuitive recognition of this marvellous deed, resurrection, as fairly within the compass of infinite energy.

Well, if Abraham was out of existence, let us say for 4,000 years—and what are 4,000 years compared with eternity?—his consciousness would be arrested necessarily when his being was suspended; and yet to him the obliteration of consciousness by the hand of death would not be more perfect in itself than the cessation of the mysterious attribute in sleep, or in the delirium of disease. If suspended in sleep or fever, it would naturally return when he awoke, or when health was recovered;

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suspended by death, that is, by such a death as would completely extinguish his being, it would enter on a new term of activity when his existence was restored by the Omnipotent volition, which we assume to be adequate to the undertaking.

While the 4,000 years pursued their flight, as during the unconsciousness of natural sleep or aggravated trouble, could not the God of Mercy and unlimited power say at the cave of Machpelah, "I am the God of Abraham?" His devout worshipper is only temporarily unconscious; temporarily, that is to say, incapable of consciousness, as the effect of interrupted existence. We see not but that the gracious words would be quite as appropriate at the tomb as in the tent. There is no absurdity in conceiving them to be spoken in the circumstances; yet, and please mark it well, he was extinct for the time in no less a degree than if death actually held over him interminable sway. In the latter case, which was the doom of man according to the creed of the Sadducees, the language, we freely admit, would be absurd; in the former—the *temporary* duration of suspended being - it could be used with singular propriety. By the voice from the flaming bush the Lord appeals against the doctrine of *eternal* unconsciousness accepted by His adversaries, and we doubt not the appeal can be shown to have triumphant force.

8. But after all it may be said, can anything be plainer than the words, "For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living," &c.? At the first glance, it is readily admitted, they seemingly embody the popular idea that men survive dissolution. Coming to their perusal with the accepted theory that man is a creature of God, composed of soul and body—a soul, remember, placed beyond the reach of death—we think it would be natural so to understand them. We could blame no one for that, especially if a doubt had never been suggested to him as to the soundness of the opinion. Once we read the words as millions read them now, and were satisfied with the ideas they appeared to convey, regarding them as the true thoughts of Jesus; but a doubt once started, we held on inquiring, till the common idea faded entirely out of sight, and what we intend to submit as the correct explanation has won our increasing confidence while meditating upon its claims year by year.

In the meanwhile we suggest, for deliberate consideration, that it is *impossible* for them to be used consistently in the sense *ordinarily* put upon them. Disharmony is immediately established thereby between the prevailing doctrine as to man and death, and the verse when so explained. What is death? Separation between soul and body, attended by the well-understood results to the constituent parts of the being man. No one, we apprehend, will dissent from this answer, so that we may go on assuming it to be correct, as we designed it should be. Death must have its opposite, and what is that? Life, or being alive. What is it to be alive or living? To be in that state in which the soul is *not* separated from the body; and that may occur in these circumstances, (1) either before death or (2) after a resurrection, which, according to the popular creed, is substantially the recombination of the two component parts of a man. How then would it look if, guided by the account of death given in the orthodox standards, the passage should be read freely in this manner, introducing the equivalents for the words in the text?—He is not the God of those whose souls have been sepa-

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rated from their bodies [who are the dead], but of those whose souls have not been disjoined from them, or after separation have been reunited to them [who are the living]; since all those who have not undergone this separation, or have had the union restored, live unto Him—for His glory!

Thus there is evolved a painful antagonism to other important Bible testimonies, and what we have written is a fair representation of the common notion as to man and death, and of course life, when correctly applied to the words of Jesus. Antagonism? Yes, and of sundry aspects too. Why, it would necessitate faith in this—That God ceases to be the God of a soul disjoined from its corporeal frame, which rupture the regnant theology protests in our hearing is *death*. It would necessitate faith in this also—That while the union subsists anterior to dissolution, or when restored by a resurrection, He is the God of all in these circumstances, inasmuch as they are alive. Happens that to be true? Is He the God of all who have not expired—of all whose souls have not been disjoined from their bodies? Happy world, and a godly race ours! Are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dead?—have not their souls been separated from their bodies? Then, according to the popular creeds, *He has ceased to be their God*. Which shall we credit? The Infinite One who proclaims, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" or orthodoxy, which, if it would speak consistently with its own definitions of death, and life, and man, must assure us that *He is not?* Thus, instead of conducting us into the open plain, where all is manifested in heaven's own light, the popular view gathers around our steps an earth-born mist, and we find ourselves bewildered wanderers, not knowing what object we may strike against, or into what pit we may stumble.

It is perhaps not an inexcusable liberty to presume that some who may have attended us in our advance, page after page, even already have been visited with rather strong suspicions that whatever the correct interpretation of the Saviour's testimony in verse 38 may be, the familiar one, though venerable with age, must be laid aside. It jars too palpably with other disclosures in the Bible. It ceases to satisfy, and the mind craves for rest, amid the agitation of uncertainty and distrust. Only in truth can that repose be had.

In a few paragraphs, still further to invigorate suspicions of the accredited view, and if possible to clear the way more thoroughly for the introduction of the proposed interpretation, we intend to discuss the vital question, COULD THE LORD JESUS TEACH THAT DEAD MEN ARE ALIVE? We intentionally shun the form, Did He teach that? and present the interrogation in the strongest shape, because our aim is to penetrate down to the lowest strata of this matter.

COULD JESUS TEACH THAT DEAD MEN ARE ALIVE?

This is a fair question, and we have no apology for pressing it into notice. Indeed, it seems to be inevitable, and if properly handled only good may be expected as the result.

To aid us in discovering a reply that will bear every reasonable test, let us imagine the Old Testament—the Bible of Messiah's day—to be

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quite silent respecting the departed; to give not a remote hint as to their state; to cast not one feeble ray on the darkness behind the veil. That would leave the condition of the gone, one might be prompted to say, shrouded in uncertainty, or something very closely resembling uncertainty. Men in all ages have been peering into the gloom—knocking at the door of the sepulchre, anxious to catch but the faintest whisper of hope that the loved ones withdrawn from the scenes and services of life were perhaps not so completely undone as accumulated appearances betokened. The thoughtful or bereaved Jew, more particularly if he allowed the record of man's creation to slip from his memory, must have had a kindred experience. Have they—the dear ones removed—no thought of us now, no love, no longings towards friends they once prized beyond gold and gems? Is the end a blank? Is light utterly quenched in the night into which they have retired? That was a tremendous word, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Can it be literally true? a broken heart by a newly-occupied tomb groans out in its desolation. Every sign indicates that it is so, but can the thought be endured? To believe him, so lately strong and loving and valiant, whose voice spoke in manly tones to the last, and whose faculties were all energetic as formerly when the shaft, winged by the unerring marksman, reached its destination, and the golden bowl was broken, and the eyes were closed, and the pulses of life stood still; —to believe him utterly oblivious of everything is a trial and an agony almost too crushing for nature to bear. We cannot tell what shade-fancies, what delusive hopes, might have been constructed. Men, the world over, guided, we suspect, by unseen agents of falsehood, have conjured for themselves wild and soothing conceptions regarding the dead; and many of them are still displayed on sad and on sacred occasions to comfort the weary, the woe-worn, the longing, and the perplexed. In these circumstances, had no explanations been afforded, we could not have wondered if surviving friends had wished eagerly for some sure and plain announcement to end their doubts—to compose for ever the cry ascending from the depths of the heart, In death what is man?

Actually such a response sounded through the ages. We have assembled and commented upon a host of its testimonies, and they are precise and unequivocal,—"In death there is *no* remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" By such authoritative words, the appalling tokens that arrest the eye are confirmed; the end is silence and darkness, accompanied with the cessation of thought, volition and desire. All is over! God wills it, and it must be right.

But if there had been no interposition from heaven up to the date of Messiah's appearance in the flesh to disclose the actual condition of things—to quiet the longings and anxieties, and bow the heart of man under the stern reality of facts—He, the Grandest of all Teachers, might have stood up amongst the Jews and cast light on the dread unknown, if perchance there had been any light to diffuse, without assaulting testimonies no less divine than His own. But could He assert that men continued to think after death, when the Divine Spirit that guided His utterance had also led another voice to proclaim, "In that very day man's thoughts perish?" The ancient instruments of revelation spake

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as "they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and was it possible for the Spirit of God to contradict by the lips of Jesus what He had communicated to seers in earlier days? To ask such questions is to answer them. He was manifested to ratify, not to overthrow what inspiration had imparted to Moses, to Job, to David, to Isaiah, and others in earlier epochs. He assumed the truth of previous revelations when proceeding with His own, and absolute concord reigned, could not but reign, among them all. Hence even devout men in this age realise not what they do when they contend that His words, "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him," inculcate the prevailing notion about the dead. Teach what they may, they *cannot teach that.*

9. Finally, on this department.—Too prominently it cannot be kept in mind that the purpose of Jesus was, from the ancient Scriptures, to establish a resurrection, in opposition to the Sadducean doctrine that when a man was dead he had *eternally parted with existence.* Where does the argument lie? In the words, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. It is there, and nowhere else in His reply. The addition, "For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living," &c., is, by an act of condescending grace, merely an expansion of the proof, explanatory of its point, and bearing, and force. To tell the Sadducees that those who had ceased to breathe were alive somewhere, as the common interpretation asserts He did, would have been an offence to their understanding, and more than ever harden them against His claims as the Messiah. Could homage be paid by them to a flat contradiction of their own Bible? Not with patience would they have borne it for a moment, be the speaker whom he might. To tell them, even were an after-death consciousness within the range of possibility, that it alone involved a physical resurrection, would in their esteem have been, as it ought to be in the esteem of all considerate men, like suspending an anchor by a spider's thread: there was no valid and self-evident connection between the premises and the deduction. So the work of exposition, we feel warranted to declare, has yet to be commenced; the adversaries were not driven into a corner, out of which escape was hopeless. To state it otherwise:—it remains, for the glory of the "Master," to show that His argument was clear, simple, straightforward, and unanswerable. We have—all of us have—an antecedent conviction that such must be its essential characteristics. Then, "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob"—how does that establish this proposition, that those worthies, and by implication the vast company interested in the spiritual promises made to them, are yet to be aroused from the sleep of death?

(*To be continued.*)

IT IS FINISHED. WHAT IS FINISHED?

DOES this question awaken surprise? Does it seem tainted with impiety? "What!" it may be indignantly replied, "Shall any doubt, hesitation, or limitation, be permitted to stand in arrest of the sublime utterance which closed the tragedy of the Cross, and sent its echoes through all the succeeding centuries? Had not the sin of s

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revolting world been imputed to the illustrious Victim, and has He not borne it *to* the tree, and has He not *on* the tree exhausted the curse? And if so, then who will deny that the cry, It is finished, was a declaration that the Divine scheme of man's redemption was, in that hour, fulfilled to the uttermost, and that a crucified Jesus was the culminating spectacle in earth's drama?"

Such may be the popular conception, and such we know to be a very frequent and favourite pulpit deliverance. Yet, in spite of both, the question again recurs, What is finished?

It is true that the imputed sin of a revolting world has been borne to the Tree, but it is not true that with the tortures of that Tree the curse has been exhausted. It is true that, in accepting the penalty, man's representative has poured out His human soul unto death, and yet it is not true that the Divine scheme of man's redemption is an accomplished fact. Let it be further admitted that, in so doing, He has encountered every possible liability which the broken law required, and drunk the cup of expiation to the very dregs—not, of course, the endurance of eternal misery: that were absurd, for eternal misery was not the alternative threatened to Adam; but death was. Death, therefore, our Lord sustained. And yet man lives not, in consequence. How is this?

And now the answer to the above inquiries deftly presents itself to view. So long as the Victim remains under the power of death, so long He is under the curse, and man's redemption is at a standstill. To adopt Paul's representation of the matter: Stopping short of the Lord's resurrection, "we are yet in our sins." Surely this is emphatic enough. So that it comes to this: that at the crisis now reached, Jesus Christ, crucified, dead, and buried, is of no value to the race; for in this momentous affair, while anything remains to be done, nothing is done. An entire world is lying stricken to death for sin, and He is only another victim added to the general holocaust. Then, the reply to the question with which we began, "What is finished?" must surely take the following form, All is finished which He could undertake as a man, but nothing beyond. This brings us to the next stage.

Alas! how familiar we are with the statement that He suffered in weakness and rose in power; yet how insensible to the illustrious issues involved. Must it again be repeated that, though His manhood had been subjected to the degradation of utter destruction, yet, as the Son of God, possessing the spirit of holiness, it was impossible that He could be holden of the bands of death; that, consequently, by the spirit of holiness, He burst those bands asunder, and proved Himself to be the Son of God with power. No longer He acts as a mortal man. He rises an immortal man—a life-giving Spirit—a God.

Is it now all finished? Is the work of redemption now complete? No, not yet.

The Divine Spirit must descend into individual hearts, and by an act of sovereign favour, quicken them into life, and cause them to be one with their living Head in every conceivable sense. Such hearts constitute His Church—His Bride. Christ has taken His Bride with her dowry of sin and shame. That dowry He has borne to the Tree. She now takes and shares His place as one body and one spirit with Him; and, therefore, is as acceptable before the Father as Christ Himself.

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Henceforth her service is a loving service; not that of trembling bondage, but the outcome of loyal elastic freedom; for there is no longer any condemnation to those which are in Christ.

And what does the Bride get with her Husband in this case? She gets Life, to begin with. It is called "passing from death into life," "a new birth, regeneration." How appropriate, then, is the term "Justification of life." With the gift of Life she gets everything. She shares with her Husband, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption —His spirit of holiness in short, which ensures an individual personal resurrection to every member. And the resurrection of the Bride is a resurrection to immortality.

Immortality, then, is the inheritance of the regenerate, and of the regenerate only. Is not this the legitimate, the logical, the inevitable, nay, the triumphant outflow of the course of thought which we have been traversing?

This is the mystery, not written in nature, not written in science, not written in the literature of this world; but it is written in the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. This is the doctrine of justification of life. This was the doctrine of the apostolic church. This was the doctrine which the church of the priests very speedily discovered to be unfavourable to their reign, and therefore very speedily resolved to exterminate. And this was the doctrine which, in defiance of the priests, Martin Luther was raised up by God to re-proclaim, and, if possible, to re-establish throughout newly-awakened Europe.

But did Luther succeed in re-establishing it? No. Is it established by any government on earth? No. And why not? For the self-same reasons which procured its abolition in the early church. Personally, because it upset man's beloved self-righteousness; polemically, because it would not suit the governmental purposes either of priest or civil ruler. A Gospel such as this was seen to be an appeal to personal love and to personal chivalry of the sublimest order. Though not necessarily anti-national, the outflow of its sympathies was manifestly cosmopolitan; whereas governmental appeals, whether ecclesiastic or civil, must always be addressed to slavish fears and to local attachments. So long as two rival powers, like those designated the civil and the ecclesiastic, can each command an army of supporters, and can both keep the field, they find themselves compelled for mutual safety to play into one another's hands. Should one fall, it is commonly supposed that the other must go too; though this is by no means a logical necessity. Still, so long as they co-exist, sitting in conclave, they may be heard debating somewhat after the following fashion: "This gospel of freedom may suit the common people, but it suits not us. It evades our control and impoverishes our exchequer. How then shall it be most effectually arrested and counter-worked? Why, simply thus: by restoring the old rotten belief of righteousness won by keeping the law; by letting in again upon the church the Greek and Egyptian philosophies; by re-investing every man with an immortal soul as his inherent right, independently of any Divine Redeemer; and by allowing Plato once more to usurp the canonical chair of theology, and to wear the diploma of doctor of divinity. Re-establish the reign of terror by assuring your ignorant, unsuspecting auditory that they have inalienable immortality, whether they like it or

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not; and when this position is universally enforced and popularly accepted, our joint dominion over their consciences, and over their purses, is secure."

The result has shown that this reasoning and this line of policy, down through all the ages since the reign of Constantine, has been eminently adapted to secure the end in view; and that end, without any verbal circumlocution, is simply the subjugation of the masses. Many of Luther's contemporaries apprehended the doctrinal truth in debate as well as he did—our own William Tyndale by pre-eminence; but the despotic instincts of those who, at that era, were prominently engaged in modelling the new Protestant States, suggested that it was safer to relinquish and suppress some portion of apostolic truth than to leave the people entirely without ecclesiastical guidance—which means ecclesiastical pillage. A governmental religion never can be the religion of Jesus Christ; but far better than the religion of Jesus Christ it answers the purposes of coercion, by suppressing inquiry, and removing the burden of individual responsibility. All you have to do is to bring into prominence (whether visible to the bodily eye or not, matters little) the two tables of the law, administer what are called the sacraments, and enforce the principle of ecclesiastical obedience. But especially and above all things, keep out of the people's sight the doctrine of the justification of life; and, should the national conscience demand its articulation in their creeds, "the conspiracy of silence" among the preachers may easily avail to render it nugatory.

Need we go any farther than this in search of the dark delusion styled in Scripture "the mystery of iniquity"? The Apostle Paul said it was already working in the church, as he wrote. There it is! Tell the people that, by their very constitution as men, they have before them an eternity of bliss or an eternity of misery; invest the clergy at the same time with the power of the keys; and, so long as the people believe it, you have them at your mercy. Yes, just so long as they believe it they will render you the homage of their fears. But let them once begin to think for themselves, and the prompt result will be that they will throw Christianity overboard as an imposture; just what we see taking place around us at the present moment.

To arrest this headlong rush of the nations towards an irrevocable Hades might be rhetorically set forth as an illustrious vocation and an angelic enterprise, could it be shown that such a mission has ever been committed to the militant church. But no where does Scripture represent that such is her task. The Bride's duty is to make herself ready; and this will tax her utmost capacity. Are the professed participants of Life in Christ at all aware of the necessity which lies upon them in this behalf? Is the confident hope of personal salvation habitually worn as a helmet, conspicuous in the world's battles (to adopt a metaphor from a far less tragic warfare) as the traditional white plume of Henry of Navarre? If so, then let the crisis come. Blessed is he who shall be permitted to carry his insignia into the thickest of the fight. To the eyes of spectators the emblem of victory may seem alternately to rise and fall; to glitter for a while in the sunlight, and anon to go down in dust and dishonour.

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Yet its triumph is sure, and its dazzling sheen
Unquenched by defeat and untarnished by toil,
Shall discover it floating sublime and serene,
Above all the wrecks of earth's latest turmoil,
The dead and the living between.

Nor doubt that such triumph shall yet be surpassed,
When the coronet won in the fight
By the chivalrous winner himself shall be cast
At the feet of his Life-giving Lord at the last,
With speechless adoring delight.

If such the reward which the ransomed shall reach,
"It is finished," may well be the legend of each,
To failure a lasting farewell.
Their mortal campaigning is finished indeed;
But who may conjecture the joy to succeed,
When "more than a conqueror" each is decreed,
Through Him who hath loved them so well.

J. WAYLEN.

NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

No. III.

THE SEVENTH SEAL.

THE general history of the Church having thus been traced out, St. John is next permitted to see the important and interesting results of all this wondrous working out of the principles of good and evil. And first, and most important of all, he is shown how great and glorious has been the harvest of souls gathered in, and what unspeakably happy results have followed in the case of some at least of the human race; of those, viz., who have come out of the great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Perhaps "the great tribulation" may include all the tribulations to which at different times the people of God have been exposed: but I think that it more especially, though by no means exclusively, refers to the long 1260 years of the dominion of the beast which arose out of the sea. Historically I think we shall find that the time during which Christians or heretics (so-called) were put to death, lasted in its greatest intensity for about half that period. It is only in very recent times that the tempest of persecution has died out, but practically it may be said that after the year 1700 A.D., it had lost much of its strength. It probably culminated in the reign of Philip the Second of Spain, and seems to have raged most furiously after the Lutheran Reformation had established itself, as though to sweep utterly from the face of the earth every thing that opposed it. Well may this period be called "the great tribulation," for every form of cruelty and death was inflicted on God's people during that time. Justly and righteously therefore are they now before the Throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Glory and honour unspeakable are to be their lot, and all creation rejoices in their happiness and peace and in the liberty which is now enjoyed by those whom "the King delighteth to honour."

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After this glorious vision has passed the seventh seal is opened, and now we see how sure and certain is the justice and retribution of our Father in heaven against all wilful sin and cruelty. The seventh seal when opened, completes, so to speak, the unfastening of the whole Book, and enables us now to see that in spite of all appearances to the contrary, God had not forsaken the earth, and that the prayers of His saints were by no means without effect.

By the "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour," I gather that God's ways are very *deliberate, slow, and certain.* Nothing is done in a hurry; all is majestic and solemn. *Time, ample time.* is always given for repentance, and this "silence in heaven" is a proof how patiently God waits before He suffers His displeasure to arise. We can imagine the impatience of John to see more of the vision; how long that half-hour must have seemed to him, and yet we cannot but admire the awful solemnity and seriousness of that momentous pause. It seems as if all heaven shared in this silence, as if the angels waited with anxious hope to see some signs of the church repenting of its sins. In vain, however, all is involved again in gloom and increasing darkness after the half hour is finished, as the seven trumpets sound.

The "seven angels that stand before God" are now seen to have each a trumpet, which they are preparing to sound. There is doubtless an analogy between this and the army of the Israelites following the priests round the walls of Jericho seven times, and we are thus again shown that every possible opportunity is to be given to the church to reform itself, for at any period during the time occupied by these plagues the church might have returned to its first love. But, no—like the inhabitants of Jericho, they will not flee and escape their doom, and therefore that doom must fall on the professing church at last. "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." This quotation from the Book of Proverbs is just as applicable to churches as it is to individuals.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." In other words, as I think, the earth (the professing church), which ought to have been now rich with fruitful crops of spiritual blessings, began to be deprived of some of its most ripe and beautiful clusters—not of all, for happily only the third part is burnt up, but enough are taken away to make even the true Israel of God very serious and thoughtful; and should have had this effect on all the members of the churches of Christ; but unhappily it did not. The rich abundance of gifts and blessings originally vouchsafed to the church were decidedly abated, but not yet entirely withheld. Much still remained, and not yet had anything like a spiritual famine set in; but, alas! the warning was not taken to heart, nor do the Christians of those days (representing probably those of the second century of our era) appear to have profited by this chastisement, and consequently we read—

"The second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood, and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

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Again the mercy of God is shown; it is only the *third* part that is destroyed. By the *sea* is, I think, typified the Gentile world, and we therefore gather that now a large portion of the so-called converted Gentiles were so only in name, for we are told that the third part of the creatures in the sea that had *life* died, i.e., the life-giving truths held by many of the Gentiles previous to their conversion were now through the very preaching of the corrupted Gospel deprived of their spiritual life. Christianity was evidently becoming partially *Paganised*—men were beginning to engraft Pagan ideas on Divine truth; a process which with many produced a result worse than Paganism itself. By the great mountain burning with fire I understand the brilliant light of Christianity, which being cast into the sea, became extinguished. The sea, or Paganism, quenched the glorious light of truth by its corruption—a proof of the exceeding danger of trying to mix up truth with falsehood.

"The third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters, and the name of the star is called Wormwood, and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter."

Who was this *Star?* Apparently one of the great so-called fathers of the Church, one who, instead of being a light to his generation, became the great source of *bitterness* between the members of Christ's body. Was it Augustine? Who can say? But certainly he corresponds in many respects to this star. Surely he fell from heaven to earth when he established a whole system of doctrines, and in his latter days openly advocated *persecution*. He was indeed a burning and brilliant light so far as his zeal, his devotedness, his piety, and his talents were concerned, and he stands out as a beacon light amidst the darkness of the age in which he lived; and yet, alas! by his systematised theology he "fell on the rivers and fountains of waters" and converted them into bitterness—in other words, he turned the glorious truths of Christianity into hard dogmatic assertions, which only engendered *bitterness*.

Lecky* says: "The writer who was destined to consolidate the whole system of persecution, to furnish the arguments of all its later defenders, and to give to it the sanction of a name that long silenced every pleading of mercy, and became the glory and the watchword of every persecutor, was unquestionably Augustine, on whom more than on any other theologian, rests the responsibility of this fearful curse. It was merciful, he contended, to punish heretics, even by death, if this could save them or others from the eternal suffering that awaited the unconverted."

This line of argument would no doubt be perfectly true if the assumption on which it is based were true, i.e., if the doctrine of eternal sensitive torture were true, it *would* be *logically* consistent, but unfortunately for Augustine's argument, this assumption is not proved, though even if it were *logically* correct, it would not thence follow that *men* ought to be the instruments of punishment to heretics. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, *I* will repay."

* "History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe."

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Nor should it be unnoticed that it was in consequence of the third angel sounding that this star fell—from which I infer that it was not an accident that raised up such a theologian as this great teacher (whether Augustine or not) seems to have been—but he was permitted to become thus a scourge to the Church because it richly deserved it. He would have had no influence at all if his doctrines had not fallen on prepared soil. Augustine, like all the rest of the fathers, was to a great extent the product of the times in which he lived; and we must not blame him too much that he was unable to see the truth. He himself states that it is with the greatest difficulty that truth can be discovered, and there is no doubt that he was perfectly sincere, earnest, and zealous, in what he believed to be the cause of Christ.

When the fourth angel sounds, "the third part of the sun, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars was smitten, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for the third part of it, and the night likewise." Now, indeed, though the truth is not totally eclipsed, a fearful amount of darkness, or, at least, comparative darkness, supervenes. If one third of the light of the sun, moon, and stars were withdrawn, we should, indeed, feel it terribly in various ways, and it is doubtful whether on vast portions of the earth's surface vegetation could survive at all—but so it is here: the light of the Gospel was becoming dark, and could no longer supply the same amount of light and love that it had once done. Professing Christianity was obviously becoming more and more Paganised. After this an eagle* flies through the midst of heaven announcing apparently that now the three next angels were to be the bearers of much more terrible chastisements than had yet been inflicted. *Woes* of a severe and terrible kind were now about to befall the professing churches, which churches were, it would seem, showing no signs of repentance or of sorrow for their sins, and when this is the case there is an absolute necessity for something yet more terrible to happen, to cause them to turn from their evil ways.

"The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen (not fall, as in our version, *vide* Alford *in loco*) from heaven to earth, and to him was given the key of the Abyss; and he opened the Abyss and there arose a smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

This star fallen from heaven was probably one of those who were cast down by the tail of the great red Dragon (Rev. xii. 4), and probably represents another great light of the Church. Who it was we are not told, and perhaps it is useless now to inquire; but it does not seem to have been so brilliant as the former one, though still a *star*. "He opened the bottomless pit." We hence learn that it required the agency of human influence and human power to open the abyss; the spirits of evil have no power unless we ourselves let them in; they cannot *force* their way against our inclination.

By the corrupt doctrines which were now being preached, the light of truth had become almost eclipsed; and out of these false doctrines, and owing to them their birth, arise the *locusts*. What are we to suppose

* So all our most ancient manuscripts.

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these *locusts* to have been? By many (and I am inclined to agree with them) they are thought to typify the swarms of monks and hermits that now pervaded the length and breadth of the Christian world. Gibbon the historian states (chap. 37): "The progress of the monks was not less rapid or universal than that of Christianity itself. Every city of the empire and every province was filled with their increasing multitudes. . . . The peace of the Eastern Church was invaded by a swarm of fanatics, incapable of fear, of humanity, or of reason. . . . The aspect of a genuine Anchoret was horrid and disgusting; every sensation that is offensive to man was thought acceptable to God, and the *angelic* rule of Tabenne condemned the salutary custom of bathing the limbs in water, and of anointing them with oil. . . . The most perfect hermits are supposed to have passed many days without food, many nights without sleep, and many years without speaking; and glorious was the man (I abuse that name) who contrived any cell or seat of a peculiar construction which might expose him in the most inconvenient posture to the inclemency of the seasons."

The locusts are described as having faces like the faces of men and hair as the hair of women. Hence, I think they were men with a strong feminine or emotional bias; and this exactly suits the *monkish* character. They had on their heads crowns like gold; not *gold*, but *like* gold. Golden crowns are the possession of the saints only; but these locusts, though not possessing the real crowns, had something like them in appearance. They were, in fact, striving to be saints, and anxious to be thought so; and they were no doubt so regarded both by themselves and by the great mass of the professing Christian world. They had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; and therefore were, I think, as much to be pitied as blamed. Moreover, though they as men were instruments of much evil, they were *energised*, it would seem, by spirits from the abyss. Many of them, as individuals, were doubtless of pure and self-denying lives, who really sought to serve God; and these, therefore, though to a great extent made the instruments of the locusts, could not be really hurt themselves, for the locusts could only hurt those men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads. Be that as it may, their doctrine and teaching was most injurious to the Christian world.

"Their sting is in their tail." From the statement in Isa. ix. 15, "The ancient and honourable he is the head, and the prophet that speaketh lies he is the tail," I infer that these locusts were professing teachers of the Christian church, who, intentionally or unintentionally, were teachers of lies; and the spiritual torture of those who fell under their influence is very aptly compared to "the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." The false doctrines and false views of asceticism now promulgated, and the self-torture advocated, were indeed terribly benumbing to the spiritual life; but through the mercy of God it was not entirely *fatal*, for it was commanded the locusts that they should not *kill* but only *torment*.

"Their power was to continue five months." It is somewhat singular that the editor of Bohn's edition of "Gibbon's Roman Empire," should state that, in less than one hundred and fifty years (five months of years) the monks had overspread the land.

"The sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of

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the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates."

The first woe having passed just previously to the sixth angel sounding, and the second woe, in a similar manner, ending, as we find from chap. xi. 14, just previous to the seventh angel sounding, I conclude that the whole of the second woe is included in the period to which the sixth trumpet belongs; and every consideration would lead us to believe that it would represent a period of gross spiritual darkness. If Babylon represent a church, as I think it does, then it seems reasonable to suppose that the river Euphrates, on which Babylon was built, represents the doctrines which give life and strength to the particular church referred to as Babylon. I think, then, that by the loosing of the four angels is meant, that now the doctrines of the apostate Romish church are permitted to attain their full development. Hitherto the angels have been *bound*, i.e., restrained from exercising their power, but now, the doctrines of a corrupt ecclesiastical policy attain their full development and vigour. I may perhaps here be allowed to say that I am by no means insensible to the force of the views so frequently taken as to these horsemen representing the Turkish Power, for I think that the Revelation has an external, as well as an internal fulfilment; as is the case, more or less, with all the Scriptures; and, therefore, in taking the view I have done above, I do not at all exclude the other; but I believe that the spiritual view of the Apocalypse is the *real* one, though the literal one is also true, but of less interest and consequence.

By the number of the army being so enormous, I gather that their dominion was to be very great and long-enduring, and that all opposition to them would *apparently* cease or be crushed. Their dominion would last, at I think, during the 1,260 years in which the saints were to be persecuted.

Terrible, indeed, do these horsemen appear to have looked, and in correspondence with this all history proves to us how awful was the spiritual as well as the temporal power of the Roman Catholic Church. Again, as in the case of the locusts, their power is in their tails, i.e., they are false prophets, or prophets that speak lies. It may seem fanciful to say so, but one almost imagines that in the words "fire, and smoke, and brimstone," which issued from their mouths, there is an allusion to the doctrine of eternal torment—"the lake which burneth with *fire* and *brimstone*," which doctrine, as we know, was undoubtedly the great support of the Roman priesthood, as eternal suffering in some form or other, is always the support of every priesthood.

These *horsemen* then, I think, represent the priesthood, whether of the Romish or other churches. Their number is very great, and their power is apparently unlimited. They evidently are a thoroughly organised disciplined body of spiritual warriors, well armed, well shielded and protected on every side.

The Apostle would seem to have gazed with wonder at this vast multitude of horsemen. Terrible, indeed, and almost invincible, they must have seemed to St. John, and it proves to us how tremendous and how awful is sometimes the power of the enemy. Happily, however, the period of their sway is fixed by God, and strictly limited to a certain

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time. The Church had brought on itself this fearful visitation. In exact accordance with the words of Isaiah to the Jewish Church: "Because this people refuseth the water of Siloam that goeth softly . . now therefore the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory, and he shall come up over all his channels and go over all his banks." The professing Church of Christ was thus, then, to be led captive into Babylon, and this captivity was to be long enduring, for not until the words "Come ye out of Babylon, my people," are heard, so long does it seem impossible for any churches, great or small, to escape this captivity. This captivity, I think, still endures, though probably now near its end.

"The rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons (not devils) and idols of gold and silver, and brass and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." By the word demons, departed, so-called, *saints*, seems to be intended, for it was the opinion of many of the Jews that the spirits of unsaved men became *demons*. If, then, this be so, as seems highly probable, what can be a truer picture than the above of the state of the apostate church at the commencement of the long dark night of the Middle Ages; that period at which we have now arrived if our rendering of the meaning of this part of the Apocalypse be correct. Did not the Church of this period give itself up to the worship of so-called saints and martyrs, reliques, images, and all sorts of inanimate objects, such as the *wood* of the true cross, the bones of so-called saints, and other things too puerile even to talk about. And as to its *murders*, its *fornications*, and its thefts, let any one read the pages of Salvian, and ask himself if the picture in the Apocalypse is overdrawn.

By this corrupt and apostate church *heresy* (so-called) was considered the greatest of crimes, and so long as a man subscribed all the articles of the church he was believed to be perfectly safe. Even to this day the fear of being thought heretical has a terribly deterring effect on the minds of many. If, then, a church so thoroughly orthodox (as it was termed) as the church of the middle ages, attached so much importance to a belief in dogmas, and yet could produce such cruel and inhuman persecutors, what, it may well be asked, has been the value of this much prized orthodoxy? Has it not been made an idol of and worshipped, and has it not always opposed itself to the investigation of Truth, and striven to extinguish every ray of Light?

Darkness, desolation, and gloom now settle down more and more upon the external professing Church of Christ, and it becomes under the influence and the terror of these horsemen, completely led captive into the spiritual city of Babylon. T. W.

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THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Chapter VI.

The Covenant Confirmed to Isaac and Jacob.

FAMILIARITY may be presumed with the following passages, namely, Genesis xxvi. 1-6; 23-25; xxvii. 26-29; xxviii. 1-4, 12-15; xxxi. 8; xxxii. 9-12, 24-30; xlix. 8-12, 22-26; and with these in view, the following observations are submitted:

1. It is both interesting and instructive to observe the way in which, in each instance, the life of the father overlaps the life of the son. Abraham lives until Isaac is seventy-five years of age (and Jacob his grandson is fifteen). Isaac lives to see Jacob return from Padan Aram with a large family about him. And Jacob, we may add, lives to take down with him into Egypt, in children and grandchildren, upwards of seventy souls, and is permitted to bless the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh—lads whom he claims as his own sons, invoking Heaven's benediction on them in terms and with incidents which they would never forget. Thus have we spread out before us the living tablets on which the Abrahamic covenant is inscribed. On these tablets, in fact, the text and the comment are both written; and as we pass from one to another of them, we not only get various versions of the same original covenant, but we gather something likely to help us of the way in which the sacred compact was understood by those sons whom God took care that His servant Abraham should instruct well for their vocation as heirs of the promises.

2. Nor are these men of the covenant mere receivers of Divine words from without; as, for instance, by oral communication from their fathers, supplemented by visions and dreams vouchsafed unto themselves: beyond this, they themselves are men of prophetic gift; for the fountain of inspiration on occasion wells up mightily within them. Abraham indeed strikes us as a man of comparatively few words—as a man rather of princely deeds than of prophetic discourses. On the other hand, the more passive Isaac—the man of field-walks and evening meditations—seems to have been gifted with a tender and eloquent spirit. His wife, his sons, recognise the prophetic fire which burns within him. Witness the eagerness with which Rebekah seeks to divert the living stream of blessing to her favourite son Jacob. Witness further, that even Esau is thrown into consternation at the thought of losing the old man's prophetic benediction, and with weeping and entreaty, extorts a second blessing, as if catching a few last drops from a lately gushing fountain. It thus plainly appears that, in the esteem of his family, Isaac's gift of Divine words was very precious. As for Jacob, for a long while, he too, like his grandfather, seems to be a man rather of deeds than of words: he is versatile, skillful, handy, managing, busy, toiling, watching, enduring. Yet, he too, has the soul of a prophet, or one which, under Divine training, becomes fitted to bear the bright flame of inspiration. His gift appears to have been lighted up first at Bethel, on occasion of the vision of the heavenly stairway and the ministering messengers of God. It afterwards shows itself on the lower plane, in the eloquence with which he pictures the long toil and hardship he had endured in the service of Laban, when the latter overtakes him in his flight. It rises

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higher in the striking prayer he offers when he has set forward his "two camps" for the meeting with Esau. It again flashes out in his greeting of Joseph on occasion of his arrival in Egypt, and once more when he blesses Ephraim and Manasseh. At length its whole force and culture flame up in the divine fire which sheds a bright and piercing light upon the fortunes of his twelve sons, when, from his deathbed, he tells them what shall "befal them in the afterpart of the days."

3. As we look over the treasures which are thus laid at our feet, one of the first things which strikes us is the persistency with which the seed and the land—the land and the seed—are set in the forefront of the covenant promises. Nor are they merely made prominent: they are, besides, drawn into very near relationship with each other. The occupancy of the land seems to stand in some sort of causal connection with the seed. To Abram the Divine word is, "Come into the land, that I may multiply thee." To Isaac it says, "Remain in the land, that I may multiply thee." To Jacob it runs, "Return unto the land, that I may be with thee—deal well with thee—multiply thee."

4. We notice, moreover, that the ultimate issue of the covenant in the way of blessing for all nations, after being thrice recorded in the story of Abraham's life, is repeated first to Isaac (xxvi. 4), and then to Jacob (xxviii. 14). The universal good is never lost sight of. The land makes for the seed; and the seed for the blessing of the world.

5. The multiplication of the seed of Abraham into many nations is now foretold with greater distinctness than ever. The "multitude of nations" of chapter xvii. 4, becomes an "assembly" or "congregation of nations" (xxviii. 3; xxxv. 11; xlviii. 4). This is a novel and striking representation. An assembly of individuals is, of course, a familiar idea; it is that of the New Testament "Church;" but "an assembly of nations"—that is rather different. Are we wrong in thinking that too little attention has been bestowed upon this fundamentally Biblical conception—an assembly of Abrahamic nations? There it is, in the Abrahamic covenant.

6. And now we come to an extension of even that idea. In "an assembly of nations"—all the peoples composing it may be upon an equality; but the prophetic Isaac gives expression to the thought of superiority and consequent subordination (xxvii. 29):

> "Let peoples serve thee,
> And races bow down to thee!"

He thus anticipates numerous and explicit prophecies of later times.

7. These last words remind us of Jacob's description of the lion-like Judah (xlix. 10):

> "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
> Nor the lawgiver's staff from between his feet;
> Until that he come in as a Peace-bringer,
> And his be the obedience* of the peoples."

"In the afterpart of the days" Judah is to be a terrible lion ("lion," "young lion," "lioness," all in one) seizing and tearing in pieces his prey; whom no one dares rouse when he crouches for rest after his work

* Or "submission:" Gesenius, Fürst.

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of destruction. "In the afterpart of the days" Judah will have and hold fast the symbols of authority till he has brought peace to the earth and the quieted nations are gathered about him in submission. Such is to be the execution, and therefore such is the meaning of the Abrahamic covenant. The signalising of Judah for the work of subjugation and pacification is the more striking when we perceive how warmly the fatherly heart of Jacob inclines him rather to Joseph than to Judah. Joseph is still the favourite son; and now even more so than ever, as well he may. It is on him that Jacob lavishes the unrestrained wealth of his affections as with a passion that has been gathering strength from the day when the warm kiss of Joseph's mother (Rachel) first blessed his cheek. On Joseph's head, in fact, are heaped all imaginable blessings, —save one: dominion is not given him. All the more clear it seems that this one reservation in Judah's favour is from an impulse for which Jacob himself is not responsible.

8. Another thing is observable throughout these covenanting transactions with the patriarchs—father, son, and grandson—and it is this: the complete unity between material and spiritual blessing which is maintained. The very distinction, "material and spiritual" seems here out of place. All is material: all is spiritual. Fundamentally, every blessing pertaining to this covenant is spiritual; for not one of them is promised save on a spiritual basis. The Divine favour which provides the covenant—sacrificial worship—personal culture,—these are the spiritual foundations on which the whole Abrahamic covenant rests. On the other hand, the superstructure, so far as yet appears, is exclusively what many good men would depreciate as being nothing more than material good. "The dew of the heavens, and the fatness of the earth, and abundance of corn and new wine," is a characteristic quotation. It almost seems that purely spiritual good is never once mentioned; although, indeed, we must not forget that the Divine Presence and the Divine Benediction ever remain in this covenant but partially developed, as a fountain-head from which further, loftier, and as yet unappreciable benefits may flow. The one thing which it is important to lay to heart is this: That merely spiritual good is not the biblical ideal of Divine benediction—least of all is it the *Christian* ideal, to which essentially belongs the cluster of blessings known as "eternal life," "a heavenly body," "the manifestation of the sons of God" as "sons of the resurrection" at the head of a ransomed and renovated creation. Those who are called to the honour of sharing meanwhile those afflictions of the Messiah which He has apportioned to His body, the Ecclesia, have of course another lesson to learn. But, as a cure for that ultra-spiritualism which, while thinking to amount to so much amounts to nothing at all, commend us to the good sense and child-like feeling which led the patriarch Abraham to turn round to his Divine Friend with the penetrating question (when Yehweh assured him that *He* was his "shield" and his "exceedingly great reward"): "Sovereign Yehweh! what canst thou give me so long as I am going on childless?" In fine, we have only to turn to the lives of these grand old patriarchs to see how material benefits may be spiritualised and ennobled when they are received as from God, and the Giver is enjoyed in the gift.

9. And this brings us to a closely related observation—which, indeed,

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is no new one, though it is now suggested by a wider survey than before —and it is this: From the first day God proposes to enter into covenant with these men, He brings them under His own direct and constant training. We have already been arrested by this fact in studying the life of Abraham. With respect to Isaac, it is not difficult to discern the Divine hand holding him up and leading him on; notwithstanding that in his case our materials are scanty, the early part of his life seeming to have been overshadowed by the more imposing figure of his venerable father, and again the latter portion of it being concealed by the rising fortunes and bustling activity of Jacob's career. Perhaps we shall not err in saying that Isaac was from infancy a "child of grace" in the sense that he was of a susceptible disposition, and yielded himself willingly to the strong moulding influence which came upon him from his devout parents. Certain it is, that just as Isaac was never *named* anew as were both Abraham and Jacob, so we are quite unable to fix upon any particular turning point in his life answerable to the "repentance," the "conversion" or the "new birth" of a later dispensation. Subject to these facts, however, the evidence is as satisfactory as we could wish it to be, that Isaac was a Divinely led and cultured man. But this Divine training, which we could not expect to see so marked in Isaac's life, again becomes strikingly evident in the life of Jacob. He, indeed, appears to have brought a strain of new blood with him into the covenant family, derived from his mother Rebekah; and therewith also a strong vein of "the old man." But, at any rate, there was in him a manifest susceptibility to Divine teaching above what poor Esau possessed. Jacob could be disciplined. No doubt he much needed it; but as we trace his chequered life and note his many disappointments and bitter griefs, we are constrained to admit that he got what he needed; and, what is more, it is plain that by the chastening he endured he became, if a sadder, yet also a wiser, holier, and more heavenly man.

JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

RE-TRANSLATIONS.

ISAIAH XXVI. 19-21.

THY dead ones shall Live;
My CORPSES, they shall surely rise.
Awake and sing, ye inhabitants of the dust!
A dew of herbs [is] thy dew;
And EARTH to Shades gives birth.

Come, my people! enter into thy chambers,
And shut close about thee thy door;
Hide thee, just a little moment,*
Until the indignation Pass Away.
For behold, JEHOVAH [is] coming forth out of his place,
To visit the iniquity of the dweller on earth upon him:
Then has the earth disclosed her blood,†
Nor throws she a covering again over her slain.

* About the shortness of a wink. † Bloods, blood-clots: blood violently shed.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MYSTIC NUMBER.

DEAR SIR,—I am a subscriber from the commencement to your valuable Journal, and always look forward most eagerly for its monthly appearance.

Watching with you the "Signs of the Times," it has occurred to me to ask you, or (through the medium of your Journal) any of your readers, if you have noticed the number of the name of the "Beast" of Revelation in the Czar of Russia.

Thus—

ALEXANDER, CZAR OF RUSSIA.

50 10 500 100 5 1=666

Or another way—

ALEXANDROVITCH.

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It is not a little singular that so many eminent names have been found to supply the requisite number, but seeing that Russia is believed to be Israel's last great enemy, I think the above worth attention. If you think so too, please favour me by inserting this in your Journal.

In this distant land, it is too much to hope to see the revered editor in person, yet I think I speak the wishes of many subscribers, perhaps in Old England too, to have a portrait of him, that we may know him more intimately; and I would suggest as a fitting means of obliging a good many, the insertion in an early number (perhaps the beginning of another year, if spared so long) of a good photograph as frontispiece.

Trusting, dear sir, you may long be spared, by the blessing of God, to conduct the Journal prosperously and beneficially to us all,

I am, yours faithfully,

Melbourne. T. M. B.

"IN THE BEGINNING."

DEAR SIR,—The above Paper contained in June number of the RAINBOW, by Mr. H. E. Swain, is disappointing. "People say that the two do not agree" (i.e., Divine Revelation and the Science of Geology). "So far from this chapter (Genesis i.) contradicting the deductions of science, it is a most glorious, a most marvellous proof of their accuracy." These statements prepare one for a clear and lucid explanation of the difficulties of the case; but instead of this, Mr. Swain does but make manifest and aggravate the irreconcilability of the present mode of dealing with the subject.

1st. There is first the question of time. In the account given by the inspired writer, Moses, the days manifestly are *literal* days: the phrase six times repeated, "*the evening and the morning*" were the first day, and so on, precludes the theory of epochs or periods of time; the quotation from Peter is not relevant, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." What the duration of time may be "*with the Lord*," and what it is to *us*, are two very different propositions. Besides, the frequent repetition in Scripture of the fact that the work of creation was completed in six days, as the basis for the sanctification of the seventh day, places this

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conclusion beyond all doubt. "For in *six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exod. xx. 11).

2nd. Then in his description of the geological condition of the earth, Mr. Swain is anything but accurate.

I. He says, "Scientific men are pretty well agreed that at one time the earth must have been in a fluid condition," and quotes the second verse of Genesis i., "The earth was without form and void." Does he mean to affirm that those words indicate a "*fluid condition*" of the earth? i.e., that the earth possessed no solidity? because, if so, it does not agree with Moses' description; the inspired writer, in verse 9, shows that when the waters under the heaven were gathered together unto one place, the dry land appeared; the condition of the earth previously being simply that of an unshapen mass covered by water.

II. Mr. Swain next refers to the coal-measures. "Let the earth bring forth grass," &c., and says, "Here again is science exactly corroborated by the Bible. Geologists tell us that the oldest strata of the earth's surface contain *no fauna, no animal remains at all*, only vegetable." Now, it so happens that the coal-measures, which are found in the *upper* portion of the carboniferous system, are rich in fossil remains of plants, animals, marine shells, fishes, and zoophytes, and *beneath* the coal-measures are the old red sandstone or Devonian system, the Silurian system, the Cambrian system, and the Laurentian system, all containing fossil remains of living organisms, and then *below* these the metamorphic rocks, embracing the clay-slate, and mica schist and gneiss groups, all hard and crystalline, containing *no* fossils. Now, how is it if the creation of grass, herbs, and trees, the mighty flora, which was the third day's work, or, according to Mr. Swain, the third *epoch*, and which is supposed to be the basis of the coal-measures; how is it that other formations or series of strata are found considerably *below* the coal-measures containing fossils of invertebrate animals in abundance, and indicating periods of time long antecedent to the *third* day or epoch? also how can Mr. Swain account for the fossil remains of animals and fishes being found in the coal-measures? when, according to Genesis i., the inhabitants of the deep and the fowls of the air were not created until the fifth day, and the larger animals and quadrupeds until the sixth day, which upon the epoch or period system of interpretation, would be possibly thousands or perhaps millions of years afterwards? If grass, plants, and trees *only* were created upon the third day, there should be no remains of animal life in the coal-measures; much less should we find the remains of animal life in formations *below* the carboniferous system, which formations must have been produced ages and ages before the third day.

The fact is, the first chapter of Genesis relates to a totally different subject than that of the geological formation of the earth; the description of Moses is *geographical*, relating simply to a change of surface necessary to fit the earth for the abode of man, and has nothing to do with the earth's antiquity. There is no contradiction, therefore, between science and revelation in the first of Genesis, for the simple reason that the two are not dealing with the same subject. The "*Be-*

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ginning" of the first verse of Genesis is *not* the beginning of the solid structure of the earth, or of its fluidical condition, carrying the mind back to the remotest ages; but the beginning of the state of things as they existed say, six thousand years ago. *Then* there was a *new heaven and a new earth.* The definition of *heaven*, as understood by Scripture phraseology, is given in verses 7 and 8: "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and God *called the firmament Heaven.*" A new atmosphere, or firmament, was needed for man and animals; and, consequently, this firmament, or heaven, was then made. Also in the 10th verse, the dry land is called *Earth.* "Thus, in the beginning (that is, the beginning of the world's present history) God created the heaven (firmament) and the earth" (dry land). In chapter ii. verse 1, the sacred historian states: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them." Peter, in his 2nd Epistle, chap. iii. 5, describes the same state of things: "The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water (at the deluge) perished, but the heavens and the earth, *which are now*, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Also in verse 13 he says, "*We*, according to His promise, look for *new heavens and a new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness." See also Rev. xxi 1.

Thus there was a new heaven and a new earth six thousand years ago; a new heaven and a new earth at the deluge; and a new heaven and a new earth will be created by-and-bye, when the earth shall become the everlasting abode of the saints.

Science and revelation are not antagonistic; Moses is not revealing the earth's antiquity; geology and its deductions may be all perfectly true; and Moses' description as to the way in which God repaired the dilapidations of ages and fitted the earth as a royal abode for man, its lord, remains untouched. Moses' description commences *with the earth a shapeless mass and void.* How came it so? What catastrophe had it passed through? Do not the broken strata, the oblique, the perpendicular, the curved, bear testimony to disruption and volcanic agencies? and how many ages had elapsed before the first day's work described by Moses was commenced, who can tell? In writing a history of England, do we expect the historian to commence with the creation of the world? And why should Moses go further back than the history of this present state of things? If the Bible is to teach geology, why not botany, chemistry, astronomy, and the like? The only discrepancy I find is the discrepancy caused by a mistaken mode of interpreting the first chapter of Genesis. Science, *true* science, is not and cannot be opposed to Revelation; natural facts and Divine facts cannot be antagonistic; they proceed from the same Divine Author, and must necessarily harmonise.—Yours very truly,

CHARLES UNDERHILL.
Woodbridge Lodge.

QUESTIONS.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to offer for your consideration a few thoughts upon 1 Pet. iv. 19, 20. Verse 19 I understand to teach that Christ, immediately after His own Resur-

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rection, went and preached, proclaimed, and by His voice raised the dead from their prison; thus displaying His Divine power by calling into life those who had been longest dead (see Matt. xxvii. 52, 53).

From verse 20, we see only eight persons were saved in the Ark. But might there not be a remnant, who, although too much mixed up with the ungodly, had nevertheless something left of the faith of Abel, Enos, and Enoch? and, although perishing with the multitude, were saved, notwithstanding, from eternal death?

Who are the *Sons of God*, in distinction from the daughters of *Men?* (Gen. vi. 2).

The words "sometime disobedient" leave hope that they did not end so. I will add no more just now, as I wish to be brief for your sake. Perhaps you will judge of above, and give me your thoughts.

I am, yours truly,

WILL. WOOLLSICROFT.

[These matters have appeared in the RAINBOW several times; but if any of our readers feel disposed to answer Mr. Woolliscroft, we will print their answers, provided they are to the point, and very short.—ED.]

NOTICES.

WANTED, the RAINBOW for July, August, and September, 1868. Any subscriber who can spare these numbers will oblige by sending them to Mr. T. J. Hitchcock, 145, Houston Street, Glasgow.

"H. G." writes: "In the interest of the truth we love, and in testimony to the sincerity thereof, pray make known through the RAINBOW the case of that persecuted curate, Mr. A. Smith. Surely the members of the Conditional Immortality Association should, of all others, use purse and pen to help him, and express their moral indignation at the conduct of his bishop." Mr. Smith has lost his curacy for teaching the Divine doctrines of which this Magazine is the advocate. We are surprised and sorry that the Bishop of Manchester—of all the Episcopate—should have done this thing. It is so unlike him. Any one who feels disposed to help Mr. Smith, will please do so through Mr. Cyrus E. Brooks, The Link, Malvern.

"B."—Yes. It seems as if the witnesses for pure truth must suffer until the Lord comes. Popularity for *them* is out of the question in the present state of the world. The approval of the MASTER is better than admiring crowds and good incomes. And they will be supported; for thus He spake: "Therefore be not careful (anxious) saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Therefore be not careful (anxious) for the morrow; for the morrow shall take care for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

AUGUST, 1881.

THE KING.

"This is the Heir."—Matt. xxi. 38.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things."—Heb. i. 1, 2.

IN the first of these passages, the husbandmen to whom the vineyard was let out are represented as recognising the Son of the Proprietor, and conspiring to kill him. "This is the heir," they say among themselves; "come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." The second is part of the opening paragraph of the invaluable Letter to the Hebrews, in which our Lord is described as Prophet, King, and Priest. He hath "spoken" unto us; He is appointed "Heir" of all things; and by Himself He hath "purged our sins." The supremacy of the Son in relation to each of these offices is placed beyond doubt. He has no equal; for He is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person;" and to Him the Father saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom."

"Heir of all things!" What a marvellous possession is this! Surely He of whom this sublime thing is declared sustains a relation to God which no being in the highest ranks of creation can claim; but, at the same time, through His rich grace, He sustains a relation to us which gives us the very deepest interest in all that He is, and all that He has, in all that He has done or yet may do, and invests the question whether He has come into possession of the whole of His inheritance with the greatest importance.

To that question it is obviously necessary to give close attention, for it lies at the threshold of all clear and consistent views of revelation. By the will of the Father, the Son is "appointed," or constituted, heir; that is to say, Lord or proprietor of all things, the heir being "Lord of all" (Gal. iv. 1). In Peter's address to Cornelius, he calls Jesus "Lord of all" (Acts x. 36); and our first

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inquiry, therefore, must be, what do the expressions "heir of all things" and "Lord of all" include? What things, places, beings, are embraced by these broad phrases? We must, secondly, ask if there are any reasons given in Scripture why such apparently boundless supremacy should be assigned to Him? And, thirdly, whether, as a matter of fact, the Heir of all things has come into actual possession of His inheritance, and is wielding the authority which possession involves?

Jesus is the Son of David, a lineal descendant, according to the flesh, of that divinely chosen monarch; and therefore heir to the throne of Judæa. This is proved by two genealogical tables, found in the New Testament; by the promise of the Angel to Mary; by the question of the Magi, when they came to Jerusalem; by many passages both in the Evangelists and Epistles; by the necessities of Old Testament prophecy; by the inscription on the cross; and by the plain words of Christ Himself.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David," are the opening words of Matthew's Gospel. Luke traces the relationship by a different process, but arrives at the same result. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David," said the Angel Gabriel. "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" asked the travellers from the East. "Son of David, have mercy on us!" cried the blind men. "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David!" was the vehement petition of the woman of Canaan. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" was the prayer of poor Bartimæus.

Were these suppliants wrong in applying this royal designation to Jesus? No; for He accepted it and granted their requests. On one occasion, a poor creature, blind and dumb, and possessed with a demon, was brought before Him, and He healed him so perfectly that the man "both spake and saw." The astonished spectators of this deed of mercy said, "Is not this the Son of David?" This must be Messiah the Prince for whom we are looking. On His entry into the metropolis, "the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." These extraordinary shouts of joy, and this equally extraordinary procession, excited the entire city, and the question on every lip was, "Who is this?" The Temple echoed the voices of the children as they sang, "Hosanna to the Son of David?" The angry priests and scribes asked Him if He really "heard" this, if He could possibly allow Himself to be greeted as the son and heir of their celebrated monarch. "Yea," said He, referring them to one of that monarch's prophetic psalms; "have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" On another occasion He asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is He?" As this was a matter

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about which there could not be two opinions, they at once replied, "The Son of David." Paul begins his Epistle to the Romans by stating that he was separated unto the Gospel of God, "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Writing to Timothy, he also uses the words, "Jesus Christ of the seed of David." Of the necessities of Old Testament prophecy, abundant proof will be furnished in the course of these papers, so that a mere allusion to it is sufficient here. The inscription on the cross proclaimed in the three great languages of the then world, "This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." And, finally, in the Apocalypse we find One who is "worthy to open" the mysterious book; and He is none other than the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, who subsequently says of Himself, "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star."

Now, this cluster of evidence proves, beyond controversy, that Jesus is Heir to the throne of David; that He is King of Israel and Judah by right of descent,—proved by public documents,—from that illustrious prince. The throne and land of Israel, therefore, are among the "things" of which our Lord is Heir in right, and by appointment of the Father, and all the people of Israel owe Him full and hearty allegiance.

The Lord Jesus is the Son of Abraham. Here the field of vision widens enormously in respect to Christ's inheritance. "By myself have I sworn,"—said the Lord to Abraham on a never-to-be-forgotten occasion, when the faith of this great soul was tested to the very utmost and found victorious,—"for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen. xxii. 16-18).

It will be recollected that this promise, confirmed by oath, was made centuries before the giving of the Law; and, therefore, no law subsequently given can affect it. "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world," says Paul, "was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Rom. iv. 13). Now Christ is the seed of Abraham. "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. ii. 16). What results from this? "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot annul, that it should make the promise of none effect. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. iii. 16, 17, 29).

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Thus, then, our Lord as the seed of Abraham is not only Heir, but the blessed guarantee that Abraham and his seed shall also have inheritance according to promise. Our inheritance, as believers, absolutely rests upon the fact that Jesus is Heir. Disprove that fact, and not a shred of title remains to any follower of the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus is the Son of Man. This was His favourite name when He sojourned upon earth, the designation by which He was pleased habitually to refer to Himself. But, like all His names or designations, it is full of significance, containing in itself a body of momentous doctrine. He is the Second Man, the Second Adam, the true Sovereign of humanity, embracing all its tribes and all its territories—east, west, north, and south. Here our view of the inheritance of which our Lord is appointed Heir must be still further widened. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psa. xxiv. 1). The hand of the first Adam was too feeble to hold the sceptre of universal sovereignty; but the Father has constituted the Second Adam heir of all things, and the magnificent empire in all its regions is destined to enjoy His benignant rule, and to bask in the sunshine of His blessed government. "I have sworn by Myself," says God by the prophet Isaiah, "the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isa. xlv. 23). And Paul, having stated that Christ "humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," adds, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 8-11).

It is manifest, therefore, that the universal recognition of Jesus as the Divinely appointed Sovereign of all has been determined upon by Him whose word shall not return to Him void. Not the least wonderful part of this unchangeable decree is the exaltation of humanity in the person of the Son of Man, which it so manifestly and purposely involves. Man fell from a state of innocence and purity over which imagination hangs a halo in the far dim past; and poetry has constructed sublime things, out of the brief glimpse of the Edenic state which we catch across the ages; but the rising again in the Son of Man, the heavenly Adam, is to a state of super-angelic eminence; for "Jesus Christ is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto Him" (1 Pet. iii. 22). That the world has gained so immensely by its loss, is of course entirely owing to the character of the glorious Being with whom it has to do. Had he been other or less than He is, we can conceive of nothing but remediless disaster; but as He is the All-Perfect,

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whose thoughts are above our thoughts, grace lays hold of the otherwise helpless condition of things, and gives the fruits of its achievement to the bankrupt and helpless. The deposition of the first man from a sovereignty which he forfeited, instead of leaving humanity in hopeless ruin, but prepared the way for the introduction of the Second Man, with a glory which excelleth; and when the Father "bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. i. 6). Here, indeed, is a marvellous step in advance; here is the Heir of all things in the person of "the Son of Man."

Christ is the Son of God. The bare statement of this holy fact suggests that, in constituting Him Heir of all things, the Father has conserved the highest interests of the universe. Every loyal being can repose with perfect confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the rule of Him who was in the beginning with God and was God (John i. 1). His administration of the affairs of His vast empire must be perfection. In the hands of perfect man the sceptre were a glory; in the hands of Emmanuel, "God with us," it is a glory that excelleth, with the superadded certainty of continuance through the ages of ages, until all enemies shall be put beneath His feet, and the inconceivably blessed age arrive, the Divine era of the universe, when "God shall be all in all."

Meantime, however, we are to remember, that it is not simply because He is His Son that God has appointed Him Heir of all things. His relation to us, and what He should do and be in connection with the human family, determined His election to the throne of universal dominion. He hath rendered service to the universe and to the Father which no honours can overpay. He hath won His way from the village of Nazareth to a seat on the throne of God, where He waits until His own throne be ready for Him, and the time for glorifying His followers shall have arrived.

We have, therefore, to inquire, secondly, what reasons are given in Scripture why such supremacy is assigned to the Lord Jesus? The relationships He sustains to David, to Abraham, to man, and to God, are clearly parts of some infinitely wise and comprehensive arrangement, contemplating an end every way worthy of the wisdom and love of the Godhead; and with equal clearness they prove that He has the title to the inheritance in each of the four cases: the legal title, chronologically proven, to the throne of David; the gracious title, as the seed of Abraham in whom the promises were lodged; the human title, as the Son of Man, the true Adam: and the Divine title, as the eternal Son of God. It is certainly a wonderful thing that all these relationships should centre in one and the same person, should meet upon the same individual, and that in each case the title should be so unequivocally clear. This must be the result of Divine arrangement; for everything about it is so unique that what men call chance can have no place here. The great question before us has two sides, one Divine and the other

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human, and we must take up each of these as it comes before us. The Heir of all things has to do with heaven and earth, with God and man. We must, therefore, if we would see this subject at all clearly, view Him both from heaven and earth. We have seen that His titles to the inheritance are complete. But this is not enough. As a foundation for the magnificent edifice that is to rest upon it, it is absolutely perfect; but in this case, comprehending such amazing issues, and involving so many interests—legal, moral, gracious, spiritual, Divine, and eternal—there must be qualification as well as title, merit as well as relationship.

He of whom we speak is Heir of David, Seed of Abraham, Son of man, and Son of God; but He must be severely tested, proved by the keenest heat of the furnace, to see if He be found worthy. He must have a work given Him to do, a baptism of unprecedented sorrow through which to go, a burden of unutterable weight to bear; and He must do the work, endure the baptism, and bear the burden, although it crush Him to the grave. He must be fully acquitted by the law under which He places Himself. He must gain the united verdict of men, angels, and demons to the perfection of His character, and the verdict of God both to the perfection of His character and the completion of His work. Never, never was there before, and never can there be again, such a series of extraordinary circumstances in the life of any being. It stands alone in history, in its heights and depths, in its moral sublimity, unspeakable beauty, and wondrous human tenderness; in its loyalty to God and love to man; and in its opposition to sin and compassion to the sinner. Detach this life of Jesus from its manifold relationships to heaven and earth, and you come upon the most inexplicable and astounding mystery that ever was brought before the finite mind. Deny that the unexampled experience of the Man of Nazareth had respect to the profoundest legislative wisdom of heaven, and the wants and woes and future of the human race, and you leave us gazing in blank and speechless astonishment. Take it, however, as the working out of an eternal problem, the solution of which should bring reconciliation to God out of apostasy, holiness out of sin, life out of death, song out of sorrow, and immortality out of the grave, and you reach a conclusion which sheds a flood of ineffable glory upon the Godhead, and leads you to cry with one voice respecting the Saviour, "He is worthy!"

We come, then, to notice some of the points which prove that there is qualification as well as title, merit as well as relationship.

There is voluntary condescension. "Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 6-8). "It is written of the

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Son of man, that He must suffer many things, and be set at nought" (Mark ix. 12). "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9). "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20). Notice the remarkable connection in which the following words of the Heir of all things are found: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and"—did what?—"laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded" (John xiii. 3-5). Here the consciousness that the Father had given all things into His hands, and the washing the feet of the poor men whom He had chosen as His companions and special friends, are linked together in the evangelical story for all time. But further quotation in proof of His voluntary condescension is not required. His whole life on earth illustrates the point. From the time that He took our nature into union with His own, to the time when He expired upon the shameful cross, it was one long and wonderful condescension. Once only during His life of lowliness are its usual associations suspended for a moment that we may get a glimpse of His glory and of the splendour of His coming kingdom, on the Mount of Transfiguration.

His patient endurance of wrong. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. ii. 23). "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7). The terrible mockery, cruelty, and insult to which He was subjected before the Jewish high priest and the Roman magistrate, during the awful hours that preceded the crucifixion, stand on the record; but on the part of the holy Sufferer there is no murmuring, no threat of vengeance, no terrifying of His inhuman tormentors by the voice that stilled the tempest and called Lazarus from the dead, and no gesture of impatience at the barbarity of the Roman soldiers as they made sport of their victim by crushing a crown of thorns on His head. It is altogether wonderful, altogether a thing by itself; a lesson in patience, meekness, and endurance which the world has looked upon without understanding, and which the Church has failed to appreciate at its true value, but which the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ has estimated and rewarded, or purposes to reward, as He only can. For in this voluntary condescension and this patient endurance of wrong, a character is revealed which sheds glory upon history, and merits the admiration of the universe. Has not this Man the qualification

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and the merit which perfectly accord with His fourfold title to the inheritance? He has. But the argument is not exhausted, and we notice—

His obedience to a substitutionary death. On this great truth of Divine Revelation the apostles of our Lord write largely to the early churches, and through them to us. All that is needful in relation to it at present is to show the bearing of the fact upon the argument we are conducting. Here it is, in the words of the Book which tells us all we know about God and His Christ: "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. liii. 10-12). "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13).

We ask, in the third place, whether, as a matter of fact, the Heir of all things has come into possession of His inheritance, and is wielding the authority which possession involves? That this is a question of supreme moment cannot be doubted; and that upon the right answer to it very much depends, is equally certain. Much of the confusion which—as we think—characterises the ordinary theology of these times springs from a fundamental error in relation to this matter. It is assumed that all the royal rights of the Lord Jesus have been actually given to Him, and then it follows logically that the Christian economy, or the dispensation of grace, is the final one so far as the present world is concerned. If this be the fair inference, the premiss is manifestly fallacious; for, notwithstanding all that is said to the contrary in thousands of pulpits and thousands of books, nothing can be easier than to prove that this is not the final dispensation. What the characteristics of the present economy are, and why it is so characterised, we shall subsequently see; but that it will close the Divine dealings with our world we most distinctly deny; and for this, among other weighty reasons, the appointed Heir of all things has not come into possession of His inheritance. The King waits for His promised throne and kingdom. The accession of God's Anointed has not yet taken place. The tabernacle of David, long fallen down, has not yet been set up. The people of Israel are still exiles; their Temple is in ruins, and their fair country is trodden by the foot of the stranger. The entire world is in a condition which proves only too plainly that Satan, not Christ, is its

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god. To call the present dispensation "the reign of the Messiah" is simply intolerable. The good men who so express themselves know not how grievously they libel the reputation of the blessed Lord. "The prince of the power of the air" dominates the hearts of the children of disobedience, and they form the overwhelming majority of the world's inhabitants, have ever done so, and ever will, until "One like the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven," and receive "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, may serve Him" (Dan. vii 13, 14). As in John's days, so now, the small minority are enabled, by grace, to say, "We know that we are of God," but they also add with terrible truth, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John v. 19), or rather lieth under the power of the Wicked One. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16). This is emphatically true still, and it is not only dishonouring to the Lord Jesus, but also a hurtful self-deception, to maintain that the royal prerogatives of our Divine Redeemer are being exercised over the world now, as His kingdom.

Besides, it is a perversion of the clear testimony of Scripture. "When the Son of man shall sit upon the Throne of His glory," events will take place which will wonderfully alter the present state of things—events which the ministry of the Church can no more accomplish than it can change the seasons. Before the confusion that characterises the nations can be removed, these heavens must open and the Son of man be revealed in power and great glory for the purpose of taking possession of His royal rights. War, injustice, oppression, cruelty, deceit, falsehood, murder, with the long list of revolting crimes daily chronicled by those whose business it is to tell us the "news," have thrown their dark shadow upon the world through long ages, and continue to this hour to proclaim that Satan's seat is here! This Christ's kingdom! This the "reign" of the Messiah! This the thing we pray for when, on bended knees and uncovered head, we say, "Our Father who art in heaven, Thy kingdom come!" No, I will not believe it. The glory of the Father, the honour of my blessed Saviour, and the character of our holy faith, alike demand that in relation to this matter I proclaim myself an unbeliever. And it is no light matter. We deceive the world—we who should be God's witnesses and truth-speakers for Him—we deceive the world when we tell it that the Lord Jesus has received the decreed inheritance, and that this is the final dispensation. What can it think of such a reign as this? The Son of God reigning, and His kingdom full of unutterable abominations, reeking with foul idolatries, red with the blood of the slain, and groaning beneath the curse of its iniquities? If He be on His throne, how is it that in the latter half of the nineteenth century since His alleged accession to it His enemies are still the majority, whilst a large proportion of those who bear

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His name are either the victims or the advocates of a dark superstition which has driven multitudes into the sunless wilderness of open or concealed infidelity?

Better far to speak the truth on this momentous subject, which is that when the Son of God shall appear, "He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor" (Psa. lxxii.). In His days the righteous shall flourish, and His enemies shall lick the dust. All kings shall fall down before Him, and all nations shall serve Him. This is a specimen of hundreds of predictions descriptive of the state of things in our world when its rightful Sovereign shall ascend His promised throne. To say, therefore, that He is on it now, when iniquity runs down our streets, and the majority of men are the servants of Satan, is manifestly to declare either that Heaven's prophets have uttered falsehoods, or that the King is unable to subdue the revolted nations to His sceptre. Of course no Christian can tolerate either of these inductions for a moment; but it is best to state, without reservation, the logical consequences of a great error in the hope that some who hold it may be led to re-examine the entire subject.

It is impossible, in fact, to advocate the opinion that this is God's final economy with men upon the earth, without reaching the terrible conclusion that His plans and purposes—as these are declared by inspiration of the Holy Ghost—have issued in a most melancholy failure. Shall we dare to entertain so appalling a thought for an instant? No, a thousand times no! We fling it from us with holy indignation, and affirm emphatically that there has been no failure,—will not be, cannot be failure. "Millenarians" are held up to pious horror as persons who hold that the Gospel is a failure; but it so happens in this case, as in many others, that those who make the charge are just the parties against whom it should be brought. So far from teaching that the Gospel is a failure, we proclaim that it testifies, not only the mercy and love, but the truth and faithfulness of our blessed Father, by accomplishing the very purpose He intended by it. It was meant to do two things: to be a witness to the world of the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and to gather out of the world a great company who are the firstfruits unto God, and who shall be fellow-heirs of the kingdom with Christ. It has done both these things, and that too on a scale and to an extent which calls forth our adoring gratitude. The testimony has been given, and the Gospel has been the power of God unto salvation to all who have believed it. It has not failed, and we never said anything so supremely foolish. But those who make this groundless charge against us are loudly proclaiming the failure of the Gospel every day. They teach that it was meant to convert the entire world to God. If this be true, no ingenuity, no power of reasoning, no pious subterfuge, can conceal the fact that its failure is notorious! Not only

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has it failed to evangelise the race, but Christianity has actually perished from regions where it once flourished. No, our brethren will take nothing by making charges against us. We are weak in numbers, but strong in truth. The Gospel has not failed, and neither will the coming of the kingdom fail at the blessed day and hour fixed in the counsels of Infinite Wisdom or its happy inauguration in our world. Nor need we wonder that a long time should elapse between the designation or appointment to the inheritance and its actual possession. Of ordinary heirs, Paul mentions the well-known fact, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all. Christians are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; but all their life long in their mortal state they are kept out of possession, having only the earnest of it in their hearts; nor can they enter on this inheritance until the time of their Master's coronation. And to come to a case not only in point but typical of that which is before us, David was anointed king many years before he came to the throne. So David's Son and Lord has been appointed and anointed by the Father, and sits at His right hand until the times of restitution. We are more than satisfied with the Father's choice. Jesus is just the King we would have. He will rule the world in righteousness, and the people with His truth; and we are "looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." EDITOR.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES.

The Character of Moses a Proof of his Mission.

I WISH in this, and perhaps a few following papers, to draw the attention of the readers of the RAINBOW to some of the many internal evidences to their truth which the Scriptures contain. The points are such as have struck my mind in reading the Bible, and they may also be of interest to others.

While to some minds, what are called the external evidences of revealed religion, such as miracles and prophecy, come home with most weight, there are others who are chiefly influenced by what are called its internal evidences. Its adequate descriptions of God, its pure and ennobling morality, its solution of difficulties which beset the inquiring mind, its response to the craving and desires of the heart of man, the absence of worldly motives on the part of its human teachers,—these, and other such considerations come home with power to multitudes who have never closely studied the external evidences of their faith. It was such considerations chiefly which, in the second century of Christ, won over to the side of Christianity, Tatian, one of the most learned, if not one of the soundest thinkers of that time. The heathen system of his day had

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disgusted him when his attention was drawn to the writings of the Old Testament. "These writings," he says, "won my confidence by the simplicity of their style, the unaffected plainness of the speakers, the intelligible account of the creation; by the predictions of future events, the salutary tendency of their precepts, and the prevailing doctrine of one God."* It is in such a field as this presents to view that we should wish to walk for a time.

The first point to which we would draw attention is the character of Moses. His writings are the basis of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament. He gives us the history of creation; a slight but very clear and intelligible sketch of the progress of mankind before the period of the deluge; the religious declension of man subsequent to that period; the call of Abraham to keep alive a theistic doctrine which would otherwise perish; the history of the people of Israel, sprung from Abraham; predictions of its future, until another prophet should be raised up by God to that people like to Moses, to whose every word they should pay an absolute and unquestioning obedience (Deut. xviii. 18). The Books of Moses, then, are the very foundation of our faith; and it is, therefore, of the utmost consequence and interest to examine into the life of a man on whose writings our Christian faith depends. Faith in Moses, our Lord tells us, is faith in Christ; rejection of Moses is rejection of Christ (John v. 46). We affirm of him that his personal character is in itself a proof of his Divine mission.

We assume as true of Moses the Scriptural account of him so far as it does not enter within the range of the supernatural. We assume, that is, that there was such a man as Moses, that he lived at the period of which the history of him speaks; that he was very great in the court of Egypt, was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and might have expected to succeed Pharaoh on the throne. We assume that he, for whatever reasons, chose rather to identify himself with the fortunes of a people then held in bondage in Egypt, that he became their leader; and, while conducting them through the peninsula of Sinai, gave them that code of laws, legal, moral, and ceremonial, which they observe to this day, so far as practicable, and profess to have derived from him. To such a man must be conceded no ordinary amount of sagacity and learning. Allow him or deny him to have had, what he certainly claimed to have had—a Divine mission to Israel—he must, whether this latter claim be conceded or refused, be allowed by all to have been one of the greatest men in intellect and knowledge that have ever arisen among men. Our argument is that his conduct throughout his life is altogether inconsistent with any other than the Divine origin of that religious system which he taught, of which he was, from his position and from his natural ability, perfectly capable of judging.

* "Church History," by Dr. Augustus Neander, v. 2. p. 427. Bohn.

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Personal ambition has always been the great motive with the originators of every religion which has only had a human origin. To sway the mind and consciences of men is the aim and the hope of such teachers. They seek this either as in itself an end, or else as a means through it to obtain for themselves and their families rule and power in temporal matters.

Now, perhaps of all human characters who have ever exercised power in the world, Moses is the farthest from any charge of personal ambition. In two great periods of his life he was undoubtedly in places of power. But as regards the first of these, his place in the court of Egypt, he had never sought it; as regards the second of these, his position as leader and lawgiver of Israel, it was imposed upon him against his will. His real character comes out in his relation to both these periods. Had he been allowed his heart's desire, that desire would have been to continue to feed his father-in-law's flock in the desert of Horeb (Exod. ii. 21; iii. 1). We will for a few moments refer to the two great active periods of his life, between which his peaceful, quiet, happy sojourn in Midian is interposed.

To those who would attribute ambition as a powerful motive with Moses, we would refer in reply to his renunciation of a foremost place in worldly grandeur in the court and kingdom of Egypt. We know as well from sacred as from profane history the eminent position which he occupied in Egypt as the adopted son of its Princess, and through her the heir to its throne.* He was brought up from his earliest years with this bright worldly prospect before him, and educated with reference to his attaining it. In physical and mental qualifications, he was fitted to adorn it; being strong and beautiful in person, of powerful mental qualities, all trained and exercised. Yet what was his conduct? Not in early youth, when he might be supposed actuated by enthusiastic notions; not in the period of old age when mental effort and the responsibility of high position might have been distasteful to him, and led him to resign power which had become so: but in the full maturity of all his powers he renounced the heirship to the throne of Egypt. He certainly was not an ambitious man. Instead of coveting the honours, the riches, the pleasures of the world which lay at his feet, he takes his place with the poor down trodden race of Israel, labouring under hard taskmasters in the brickfields of Egypt. His heart lay with these his persecuted brethren. He takes his part with them. For them he leaves the brilliant court of Pharaoh and flies into the wilderness, having there no hope of ever leading them or ever seeing them again.

The next forty years of his life he spends in the wilderness of Midian (Exod. ii. 21). He is contented with his lot; so unlike what he had been used to from infancy. Wife and child

* Josephus' Antiquities. Book ii. Chap. ix.

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and pastoral pursuits satisfied one who looked beyond this present life (Heb. xi. 26). The quiet of the pastures of the wilderness, the sublimity of the mount of God, with its varying lights and shadows, the contemplation to which the sun by day and the moon and the stars by night led up his mind, these were dearer to Moses' heart than the grand cities and monuments of Egypt, Thebes with its mighty population; Zoan with its vast surrounding plains, where he afterwards wrought his miracles; Memphis, whence stretched in long line the pyramids, and out from whose soil rose up the strange calm sphinx to gaze out through the centuries over the land of the Nile. The peaceful occupations of shepherd life, the tent where wife and child awaited his return, the wise converse of Jethro,—these were of higher, truer value to him than the palace and the court, with their intrigues, and envies, and ambitions. Where he lived his peaceful life, there he would willingly have died. His heart did not turn back to Egypt.

As such was the prevailing turn of his mind, we have in his age at the period when he went to assume the place of leader to Israel additional reason why it was not ambition that led him to take that step. It is in youth that daring lofty projects are conceived. It is in the prime of manhood that they are carried out. But age is not the period for commencing such. Moses at the age of forty had turned away from the paths of ambition. For the succeeding forty years he had lived in contentment a life of privacy. He would not at the age of eighty, of himself, have undertaken one of the most difficult positions possible from any motive of personal ambition. It is true that at a period long subsequent to this, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deut. xxxiv. 70). But he could not have calculated, when he undertook his mission to his people, on such a wonderful prolongation of his vigour, doubtless given him to enable him to bear the heavy burden of Israel until their arrival at Canaan. Neither he nor they ever anticipated the forty years' travel in the wilderness (Num. xiv. 33).

Most certainly the office which Moses undertook was one of the most arduous in the world. To rescue a down-trodden people from the grasp of the most powerful military monarchy in the world—to lead out to unknown difficulties an abject race—this was the mission with which Moses was charged. We may safely say that at the age of eighty years it would never have been suggested to him by personal ambition to undertake this mission, even though he had the aid of his brother Aaron, somewhat older than himself.

But it is impossible to overrate the reluctance which Moses felt to undertake his mission to Egypt. Let us take up the third and fourth chapters of the Book of Exodus, and read the sentiments of his mind when it is proposed to him. His thoughts and his language are the farthest possible removed from those of ambition. It is positively piteous to read excuse after excuse, plea after plea, urged why he should not go. "Who am I that I should

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go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exod. iii. 11). "What shall I say unto them?" (Exod. iii. 13). "They will not believe me!" (Exod. iv. 1). "O, my Lord, I am not eloquent" (Exod. iv. 10). But probably his last plea brings out most strongly the deep-seated reluctance with which he contemplated his departure from Midian to Egypt. It is, "O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send" (Exod. iv. 13). Who is this? It is no other than "the prophet" of whom he speaks in Deut. xviii. 15 as to be raised up in after times to speak to man the message from God. Such a messenger had been looked forward to from the period of man's fall, and still in Moses' time he had not come. Moses looked forward to his coming, but plainly knew not when he should come, and did not expect it until after he himself should have passed away from this earthly scene (Deut. xviii. 18). But yet when the mission to Egypt is brought before him, in his extremity of reluctance he prays that the great prophet may come before his time to free him from a mighty task, which he felt beyond his power. As the Church of God in the present age, often sad and suffering, impatiently has prayed that the Lord might come back the second time sooner than the Father's appointed season, and are disposed to murmur because the Lord appears to them to be delaying His coming, so Moses, meek among mankind, at sight of the office proposed to him, plea after plea of his set aside, impatiently prays that God should *for him* alter His own times and seasons, and send the Great Messenger sooner than He had intended. The man who felt and acted thus was not moved by ambition to undertake the deliverance of Israel. He had no care for greatness which would lead him to play the impostor's part, and say, "The Lord hath spoken unto me," when he knew no such voice had come. He was plainly a man to whom the quiet of private station was far dearer than greatness. He felt what Milton has so beautifully described in his "Paradise Regained," that—

> "A crown,
> Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
> Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
> To him who wears the regal diadem,
> When on his shoulder each man's burden lies;
> For therein stands the office of a king,
> His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
> That for the public all this weight he bears."

It was duty, not ambition, which chained him to the leadership of of Israel. His was no easy task. Murmuring and rebellion were ever in his ears.

But the absence of ambition is clearly seen in Moses, not only in regard of his own personal greatness, but also as regards his family. He had two sons born to him in the land of Midian, Gershom and Eliezer (Exod. xviii. 2-4). These men were in the very prime of

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life when their father led forth the hosts of Israel out of Egypt. Though Moses was at this time eighty years of age he was and so continued down to the very close of life, possessed of all the vigour of his early manhood; his eye not dim, nor his natural force abated, he did not take one single step to raise his family to greatness in his lifetime, or to secure their possession of it after his death. Their names are given us in Scripture. That is about all. They were, by reason of their birth, heads of a family division of the tribe of Levi, but they were not admitted to the honour and power of the priesthood which were conferred upon Aaron and his sons. They had no post of dignity conferred upon them by their father, and on the approach of death he handed over the leadership of the people to Joshua, a member of a different tribe, that of Ephraim. His descendants are of no note. His actual grandson we read of as "an obscure, wandering, semi-idolatrous Levite, content to serve an irregular ephod for a double suit of apparel and ten shekels (i.e., about thirty shillings) a year."* So little do we read about the family of Moses in the Pentateuch, so completely are they passed over where we might expect them to be brought forward as the sons of the great lawgiver, that Mr. Davidson, in his "Introduction to the Old Testament," has argued from it that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses at all (p. 15). This is but a weak argument. The real cause of the silence is that Moses was not actuated by any worldly ambition in taking on him the post which he fulfilled in the Exodus of Israel.

Freed from the charge of personal ambition in assuming the office which he filled in life, we can attribute his conduct in doing so to one motive only, namely, his conviction that he was sent by God. All through his intercourse with Israel, he appeals to miraculous interposition and direct communication with God. He does so when first he returns to Egypt and puts forward his right to lead Israel out of captivity. He does so at the passage of the Red Sea, and through the long forty years' sojourn in the wilderness. He claimed throughout perpetual miracle, and a voice ever speaking to him as from God when he asked for counsel. With no worldly object for putting forward an unfounded claim, and therefore free from the suspicion of counterfeiting what was not real, we have only to inquire, whether he had opportunity, and was competent to judge of the truth of that miraculous attestation to which he laid claim throughout forty years. There can be but one answer, and that is, that he had full opportunity, and was fully competent to judge. It was to him that the Divine Voice was said to speak; it was by him, at his command and in his presence, that the mighty works of the Exode were said to have been performed, and this through a period of forty years. Moses had, indeed, the opportunity of judging of the reality of what he claimed.

* Farrar's "Life of Christ." i. 9., on Judges xvii. 10; xviii. 30.

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With regard to his competency, there can be no other reply than that he was fully competent to judge. A man undoubtedly of the greatest knowledge and of a powerful reason, he was fully competent to decide whether that voice that came to him in his seasons of perplexity was a Divine voice from God, or the echo only of a crazed imagination. He was fully competent also to test the miraculous nature of the works said to be wrought at his command, and through the wondrous rod in his hand. He could well and truly judge of the series of miracles in Egypt, where Divine was contrasted against human or diabolical agency. He could tell whether the passage across the Red Sea was effected by a miracle elsewhere unequalled in its kind, or through some ordinary wind and low state of the tide. He knew whether the people were fed for forty years by a heavenly food or not. He could tell whether the water burst forth from the stony rock or not. He could judge, in fact, as accurately of the reality of all that was supernatural during the forty years of his leadership as it was possible to judge. He did so, and his judgment was that God had sent him on his work, and that he must therefore go. He would have avoided the work, but he dared not do so with all the evidence before him that the God of whose creative work he had written in the Book of Genesis, had now come forth from the clouds and the thick darkness which surround Him to make a revelation of His will and purpose to His creatures. To the proof of this Divine apocalypse, Moses gave the full assent and consent of a reason and a judgment never surpassed by human intellect. He could not deny it. He accepted it with an unhesitating assent. Because of it he undertook and accomplished a work from which his natural feelings strongly turned away. Controlled, as well as sustained by it, he bore the heavy burden of a discontented, unbelieving, rebellious people for forty long and weary years, until, upon the top of Pisgah, he rendered up his spirit into his Maker's hand, and was buried by God Himself in a valley in the land of Moab. Moses' faith in his Divine mission was one of the many internal evidences of its truth.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. VII.

Nazareth.

THE righteousness which justified humanity was wrought out mainly in the territory of the ancient apostate kingdom, while in the dominions of the more faithful Judah—at Jerusalem, was offered up the world's sacrifice for sin. Idolatrous Israel had far the loveliest portion of the land. In scenery, in fertility, in

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climate, in its capital, its ports, its highways for commerce, the kingdom of Samaria greatly excelled the kingdom of Judah. To it belonged such worldly heritage as beguiled the choice of Lot, while the more faithful sons of Abraham, with less of this world's good, possessed while obedient, the blessings of superior favour and protection.

Amongst the many picturesque spots in which Galilee abounds, the testimonies of travellers award to Nazareth the palm.

If the villagers of our Lord's time were humble, they were in the enjoyment of much more dignity, leisure, and consideration than belong to the situation of modern labourers and artisans, and they possessed the treasure of a lovely neighbourhood, of grand and inspiring natural features—a piece of music wrought by glaciers, and floods and volcanoes in ages past, until it became for man a war song, a pastoral, an anthem, a poem. Who can even guess at the rare quality of the emotions by which the soul of Jesus was possessed as all the varied beauty of the world unfolded itself to the eyes of His perfect childhood. In Him there was no cramping of the soul through partial endowments, unequal developments, and abnormal susceptibilities—no qualities were wanting, and none were present in excess or in deficiency. The souls of the mathematician and the poet, of the artist and the engineer, of the statesman and the musician, of the wild child of nature and the cloistered student, of the scientist and the philanthropist, of the philosopher and the explorer, of the missionary and the monarch, were all, in a degree in which no human breast before or since possessed them, present with the Deity Incarnate. For the "true and proper humanity" consists not simply in physiological identity, but in the comprehension of every attribute, intellectual as well as physical, by which humanity can be adorned. With a heart thus strung, what diverse and exquisite chords were awoke by the region of Nazareth.

The habit of resorting to the mountains for prayer ere break of day, and when it fell, was doubtless formed here when the duties of the day required that such leisure should be stolen from sleep.

Let us in the exercise of a devout imagination follow the Child Jesus, as leaving his mat among the chips of the workshop he emerges—a moving spot of gray, amid gray hills and muffled valleys, and makes for His oratory on some beetling height that overhangs the village on the west. Gardens bordered by the prickly pear, vineyards in which are bunches of grapes three feet in length, and each separate fruit three inches and more in girth. These are passed, and now the golden head is lost in the high standing corn, but presently emerges to double and clear the clumps of fig and olive and the occasional palm. As the light foot commences the ascent, stone and pebble rattle to the bottom with startling distinctness, for all is so still within this mountain cradle, that even the rustle of buds opening to the sun can be

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heard. Pausing and turning at intervals to see the houses shrunken and the mountains larger, the gray moving speck ascends, while the sky above assumes a richer hue, and the stone dead pavement of cloud becomes a shower of golden arrows with plumes of feathered silver.

It is but a step or two to the summit, and already looking back, a glorious prospect opens. The mountains of Galilee, in multiform elevation, herd themselves together for thirty miles towards the north, while towering above them eastward, are the grander groups of Lebanon; land-waves, with crests of snowy foam, which the sun has kindled into rosy wine. Presently, with growing light, these waves will solidify to thrones and gates of heaven, first of gold and then of ivory, till at length as flashing, dazzling diamonds, they cut and fray the solid blue behind. The peaks of the frowning precipices that skirt Tiberias on the east, are finely filigreed with light, but scarce a peep of the waters, buried in depths and shadows, can be obtained. Nearer, and due east of where the Watcher stands, the beams cross the tortuous ravines in which Jordan labours, and fall on Tabor's Mount; earth bubble of a thousand feet upon the plain; mountain with which we may connect no transfiguration except that which now takes place as the mists that rise from its groves of oak become a shining incense, which robs trees of their supports and towers of their foundations; towers and embattlements which, nevertheless, assert themselves in upper air, and receive a golden recognition from the sun.

Higher must the climber rise, just a step or two, before the circuit of the prospect can be completed. Ah! young man of modern days, and old man also, what an enlarged view of duty will only a single step of higher practice give us! In climbing mountains to go one foot higher is to push the horizon back for miles.

It is only a step or two to the summit, and the Child Jesus stands sweeping the prospect south and west of Him, which before was hidden by just a yard-deep course of limestone. Now stretches before Him a long and lovely valley, girt southwards by the mountains of Samaria, which gather themselves for a run westward, altogether and in line, till the sea stops them, and they stand loftily at bay as the promontory of Carmel. From this point the eye can trace back the river Kishon twenty miles, till the valley that has wended east by south is terminated by the little Hermon and the mountains of Gilboa.

Beautiful is this undulating expanse, on which, wide-spread with green islands of millet, rolls a sea of yellow grain. The gentle wind blows, passing shadows over it; opening its ranks, and discovering the crimson flowers, which also run like blood-stains through the rank luxuriant grass and thick-set thistles. By the river's brink may be just discerned some moving specks—dromedaries in file—a procession that has stopped to salute the God of Day; for here is the ancient trade route between Egypt and Damascus. Last, amid

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higher eminences and far away in front, the scorching sun may now be picking out the columns of the long colonnade of the Temple of Augustus which Herod the Great had placed upon Samaria. And now, returning to Mount Carmel, one can see its richly wooded slopes more clearly, its groves of lentisk and of myrtle, and its oaks—ilex and ægilops—yielding the Velonia of commerce.

From thence Elijah ran before the chariot of Ahab after his slaughter of the priests of Baal, and saw his shadow swallowed up by a larger one that ran faster, as the broad plain darkened beneath the rainfull sky. Speak, lovely plain, and tell us thy name! Thou art fair and smiling, as a woman that hath wiped her mouth and says she hath not eaten. But hast thou not eaten blood? History may name thee Jezreel or Esdraelon, but thou art the world's Aceldama. Here were the hosts of Sisera nailed to the earth. Here Midian and Amalek descended like the dew, and Gideon's three hundred scattered them beneath the soil. Here Samuel overthrew the Philistines, and the Philistines overthrew Saul. Jehu inflicted judgment upon Ahab, and because his human wrath worked not the righteousness of God became himself also the object of Divine retribution. Such is the plain which lies at the feet of the Child Jesus, and as He places His palm upon the grass something small, and soft, and round stirs beneath it. It is the vanguard of an army of young locusts, who will eat away the loveliness and bounty of the scene, and while they bring straitness in the homes of the poor, will make the corn merchants rub their hands with glee, for the scarcities of the world are the traders' harvests. Something else is stirring in the grass—a serpent, but no sooner has it lifted its head to look at the fair boy than it has rushed away. Is the head turned once more to Carmel—behold, the mists behind it are streaked with living silver, infinitesimally quivering amid the haze. It is the Mediterranean, which the sun has touched, and its lovely colour will struggle through just now and clasp the shores with belts of amethyst and turquoise. What emotions of love and resentment gathered like storms that could not burst within the heart of the Divine Child, as the history of those plains disclosed itself to His unique intelligence! What endurance of great purposes delayed, and repression of great truths until the hour had dawned in which they could be spoken! Withal, how sweetly and perfectly submissive to the Father's will arose the prayer to heaven—the prayer for peace and establishment of God's kingdom upon earth! There can be no doubt at all that hundreds of times upon those heights this prayer was breathed by Him who is the world's Redeemer, the cry of the jackal, like the painful screaming of a child, mingling as part of the groaning of creation with the supplication! And how have these repeated prayers been answered? Esdraelon has seen the chivalry of the West contending there for the sepulchre of the dead and risen Christ. The blood of Egyptian, Arabian, and Saracen, of Mussul-

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man, Jew, Gentile, and Christian has sunk into the soil and fed its crops. We can yet hear the thundering volleys from Kleber's indomitable squares, when, behind barricades of the Ottomans they had slain, they awaited Napoleon's succour amid a swarm of foes.

And that fair smiling sea—is it not treacherous as the smiling land? What tales could it not unfold of what the Man of Destiny effected when Jaffa's captives were platooned upon the sands, and the sick French were poisoned by their general, and his destiny was turned westward again before the bloody towers of Acre. Jezreel, thy history is long and bloody, and terrible is the thought that, perchance, the bloodiest is yet to come. Thy name signifies "God will scatter," but also the root of it signifies, "to plant." Here in these vales drenched by the blood of almost every people and tongue and nation under heaven, Israel and Judah shall again assemble and "appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel" (Hosea i. 11).

Whom shall they appoint to head them? Who, but the Child who prayed upon these heights for this breaking of the dawn. "Then shall the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, that it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hos. i. 10). "Thus saith the Lord God, In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, and desolate, and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate. I, the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xxxvi. 33, 35, 36, 38). Thus yet future is the political and physical redemption of Israel and the world; and, alas! mysteriously the human slaughter that has defiled that valley and those shores for such long ages past, is destined to be enacted on a scale yet more fearful and calamitous ere the trump of war shall sound a long, last note. Here it is conjectured tribes more various than have yet been seen upon it shall muster for a final combat with the Prince of Peace. This is the field of Armageddon, which every preceding struggle has but prophesied. Here on the very seat of war and bloodshed, shall ensue the victory to Him who hath said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem hem from death: Oh, death, I will be thy plagues: Oh, grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos. xiii. 14).

Bristol. HENRY DEACON.

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EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN.

The Fancied Universality of Greek in the Early Church.

THE unproved position that "all the New Testament was written in Greek," rests upon the asserted universality of the Greek tongue, especially in the East. Let us see how even the brief account given by Milner, of Ephraim, bears upon this asserted prevalence of the Greek tongue.

"He was the son of Christian parents, and was born at Nisibis in Mesopotamia. From his childhood he was educated with great care, and was devout, studious and contemplative to an uncommon degree. The time when he lived was the *fourth century*, at which period the notion of the superior sanctity of a solitary life had been so much insisted on by great men in the church, that few persons were prepared to follow holiness with steadiness amid the practice of all social duties." That Ephraim, in his youth, had a strong inclination for a solitary life needs excite no surprise. But it would have been interesting to have been told how, when studying the Scriptures in retirement he was led to leave it, and go to live in the great city of Edessa, for the sake of joining Christian assemblies in the worship of God, and of rendering himself useful to his fellow creatures. "He wrote much on the Scriptures and various devotional pieces *in the Syriac*, his native tongue, which writings were, in his lifetime, translated into Greek, and were much admired by all the Eastern Churches."

Edessa was, in the days of Abraham, who was born there, called "Ur of the Chaldees;" and who can doubt but that, when the Assyro-Chaldean dynasty was overthrown by the Medes and Persians, and King Cyrus was moved to grant liberty to the whole captivity, both of the ten tribes and the two to return to Judea, even those who chose to stay in Mesopotamia would turn, with longing hearts, to the spot where their common father first saw light. Next to their former home in Canaan no spot on earth could be so dear to them as this place where "the friend of God" was born. It is fair then to expect that his children would love to live in the land of Ur. But there had been a time between the victories of Alexander the Great and the time of Christ when Greek influence was so great as to give the name of a town in Macedonia to the birthplace of Abraham. *Edessa* is a Greek name, and belongs not to the descendants of Shem. Here, then, we should find Greek so well known that no translation of the New Testament should have been needed for the people of Edessa. But scholars admit that the "Peshito Syriac" was needed as early as 150, or even in the 1st century; and the uniform and unbroken testimony of the Syrian churches assures us that Edessa was the first centre of Christian success, which required this New Testament in Aramean. How, then, could Greek be so well known in that city?

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Then the theory which gives us Greek originals, read and studied everywhere, should have increased the acquaintance of the churches with that tongue by the time Ephraim became an author, so that he ought to have written *in it* and not in the *Syrian* language, for the constant use of a language in the weekly services of a church is decidedly educational. Who can estimate, for example, how much our Authorised Version, with its excellent Saxon simplicity, used weekly in churches and chapels, has done to fuse the rude dialects of our different counties into a common English? If it had not been so could "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," written in like style to the Bible, have taken such marvellous hold of the popular mind? If, then, the theory of the prevalence of Greek when the New Testament was written, and its suitableness to be the tongue to reach all churches, had been true, it ought to have been impossible *in the fourth century* for Ephraim to reach the Edesseans in any tongue but Greek. Now, that he wrote in Syriac implies that at no time since Christ appeared had Greek been well known at Edessa. There is another remark to be made here. The Roman authority had become paramount at Edessa in the fourth century. That it was not so in the time of Christ follows from several considerations. Not long before the advent occurred the fearful defeat of Crassus and the Roman army by the Parthians in this very neighbourhood. Then the Abgari, a word meaning father of sojourners, ruled at Edessa in the time of Christ and His apostles.

Further, the Christian cause flourished at Edessa most when persecution was cutting off large numbers of Christians in the regions where Rome was dominant. A noble structure was being raised at Edessa to Christ, when in the Roman empire bishops and deacons, and even ordinary church members, had "no certain dwelling place." So if the Imperial army had then been long enough and strong enough to have reached the birthplace of Abraham we should not have heard of his children building a temple at Edessa like the one destroyed by Titus; and yet when Ephraim wrote his works Constantine was so far master at Edessa that he could order the closing of a fine Arian church in this city. By this time then the Imperial Court, so "favourable to the spread of Greek," must have, according to this view, promoted still further the knowledge of that tongue at Edessa; and yet Ephraim did not use it, not even as Josephus did, who wrote the "Wars of the Jews" in Hebrew and then Greek. For the historian says "Ephraim's works were translated into Greek in his own lifetime," not by himself but by others. What is there here between the lines? Is it not that the demand in Syriac was quite enough for his power to supply sufficient copies, so that those who wished to give their teachings to Greek-speaking churches had to make versions out of Syriac into Greek?

Mark this suggestion that *books in Syriac were turned into*

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Greek in the fourth century. It needs to be pondered, for the same thing may have been going on for three centuries unnoticed by our scholars, and will solve a number of their critical puzzles, which yet are unsolved. Just put on the shelf all your critical lumber which has accumulated into 670 Greek manuscripts with their many myriads of various readings, and no end of volumes of guess and conjecture manifold. And then hear the early Syrian churches who tell you "that Jude the apostle secured them the Peshito," and then try some of the unsolved facts that look us in the face.

1st. The harmony between the Peshito and the *Itala* or old Latin.

2nd. The harmony between the Codex Bezæ, that irreducible surd to critic and the Peshito. This manuscript was in the library of the Institute of Irenæus at Lyons before the learned of Europe knew the New Testament Peshito to be in existence.

3rd. The Codex Laudianus No. 3, agreeing with the Peshito in giving *Titus* where others give *Justus* in Acts xviii. 7.

This man might be called *Titus Justus in full*, and so his first name be used in the Peshito. But a *greater Titus* than he is found in New Testament story, and thus in after times Justus, the latter name, or surname, might be preferred. Now this codex bears marks of being of the very earliest Greek ones. The fact is, both the Codex Bezæ and the Codex Laudianus are very ancient, and might have been made under the eye of one who knew the excellence and apostolic authority of the Peshito.

Looking upon the larger Gregorian or Armenian Church as determining, ultimately, the course taken by that at Edessa, we may observe that the Eastern Churches had not broken with the Greek and Latin ones when Ephraim wrote his works. These Armenian Churches were in the midst of a fierce persecution from the Persians when *the council* was held, from whose decisions they *dissented* with a firmness which has never given way *to this day*; but this happened after Ephraim's time, or, if not, its effects were not so felt as to make him objectionable as a teacher to the Greeks.

Here comes in another manuscript, the "Codex Rescriptus, called Ephremi," because that over a copy of part of the Old Testament and over the New one of an early date, the works of Ephraim have been written, *in Greek*, by some scribe of the twelfth century.

Scholars say this manuscript was a Latinised one. Admit them to be right. The Latin Church was looked upon with suspicion and distrust by the Greek leaders in the twelfth century. Then, wanting writing material to preserve the works of Ephraim, this scribe of the twelfth century has no hesitation in writing over an ancient document which he distrusts, matter which has held its own for six hundred years after the Greek and Syrian churches parted from close fellowship. You will find manuscripts, both of

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the Greek and Latin classes, which send your thoughts back to the Peshito; and this is just what should be if *good men* of both churches knew the apostolic origin of the old Syriac. They could not fail to cull flowers of utterance from that garden of the Lord to plant in their different church enclosures.

We have assumed that some member of the Greek Church wrote the works of Ephraim over the matter of the New Testament, which has been found beneath. Now this is a fair conclusion, for who else would have done it in the twelfth century? A heathen author or scribe would have chosen other matter than that of a Christian father: a Latin churchman of this date would have used his own tongue, and not Greek. But if he found the first writing fitted to support his own vulgate, he would have hesitated before he covered it with teaching which, however excellent, must be placed far below the New Testament. Among Protestant shopkeepers we have often observed an unwillingness to use the leaves of a worn copy of the Authorised Version for wrapping purposes; while one of the same trade who belonged to the Roman Catholics would freely use the same sheets. Why? The Authorised Version was held *heretical* by the one, but in the esteem of the other it was "*Holy Writ.*" Now human nature varies little through the centuries, so that a like feeling nine hundred years since might prevail with a Greek towards what he looked upon as having been tampered with by a rival Church.

We hold, then, that in the twelfth century Ephraim's teaching was preferred to some early manuscripts of *the word*, and that it was a Greek, and no Latin Christian, who turned that ancient Greek codex, "The Ephremi," into a Rescriptus. If otherwise, it might have been covered with Latin. Much has been urged in favour of a Greek, and not a Hebrew or Syriac original of the New Testament from the quotations found in it from the Old Testament. These are said to be made, not from Hebrew, but from the Greek of the Septuagint. Lengthy tables are placed before us to prove this. Now what would follow if it were proved to be so in the *Greek manuscripts?* Suppose, for a moment, some scholar of the second century, doing what some one in the fourth did, in the case of Ephraim. Such a translator might avail himself of work already done, by taking his readings from the Septuagint instead of making them from the old Hebrew, which might be unknown to him. In such a case, the correspondence between quotations in Greek and the Septuagint would prove nothing in favour of the book in which it occurred, being originally Greek. But there is no such strong correspondence between the two as is alleged.

In the tables furnished, for example, by T. H. Horne, many quotations which are exact, fit both the Hebrew and the Septuagint. All these ought to be given up to the Hebrew as having the prior claim. Then in the class *nearly agreeing*, the like case occurs. Many too there are that match neither Hebrew nor Greek, as we

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have them now. And one marked case, Eph. iv. 8, compared with Psa. lxviii. 18, agrees with neither, but is exactly the reading of both the Old Testament Peshito and the New one. On this the Syrians argued that Paul had and used the Old Testament Peshito. Dean Prideaux cut the knot by guessing that the Syrians had detected this turn of expression in Ephesians and altered their Old Testament to meet it.

It may be well here to give the clause. Hebrew: "Thou hast received gifts for men." Septuagint: "Thou hast received gifts in manner of men." Old Testament Peshito: "Thou hast given gifts to men." New Testament Peshito has: "He gave gifts to men."

No one who knows what he says will pretend that the Old Testament Peshito is rendered from *such* Hebrew manuscripts as are now found, and to derive it from the Septuagint of to-day is impossible. It came from a purer source than these modern cisterns. And there is no shadow of foundation for Prideaux's slanderous guess. But he was more to be excused for uttering it than we should be to-day, for the noble Syriac Bible which Dr. Buchanan procured in India, which shows what pains those Christians took to preserve their Scriptures, was unknown to the Dean.

Again it is said: "The very heretics admit the main facts found in the New Testament." Yes, and so they might, if they had read them in Syriac in the Peshito. Porphyry is admitted to have studied *Syriac* as well as Greek; also to have had intercourse with the Nazarenes, near Bashan, who adopted only the *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*; and so he could know the facts of the Gospels if he never saw them in Greek. Further, in proof of the early circulation of the facts and discourses found in the New Testament, the numerous quotations found in the early Christian authors are adduced. Scholze has reckoned upwards of one hundred and eighty authors who have quoted the New Testament; but mark the three-fold division of these quotations. First, from the original Greek; or, second, from the Latin, which was earlier than Jerome's revision; or, third, from the Syrian versions.

Now this is such an arrangement as one would make who was wedded to the delusion of an exclusively Greek original. The true account should have been quotations taken

1st. From the original and apostolic Peshito prepared under the care of Jude for the Christians and Hebrews who dwelt at and near Edessa.

2nd. The old Itala made from it, and hence containing so many Hebraisms and Syriasms, and so often agreeing with it in the excellence of the sense.

3rd. From the Greek, which was to some extent the original, as in 1 Cor. and 2 Cor., and in epistles to other Greek-speaking churches, but by no means the original of the whole New Testament.

Jude could obtain a copy in Syro-Chaldaic from every author of

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the Books of the New Testament, but it remains to be proved that they could all write Greek. So then, it says everything for the antiquity of recorded Christian facts that so many writers have quoted them; but it does not support the claim put forward for Greek originals.

Ephraim, the Syrian, wrote an account of the life of his friend Abraham. Both these names are manifestly Hebrew, and suggest that both men were descended from the Father of the Faithful; and, if so, Christianity continued to lay hold of an "election of grace," who were not only of Israel but who were Israelites indeed.

One incident in the life of Abraham, the friend of Ephraim, confirms our position that Greek was not in common use in Mesopotamia. In the country outside Edessa dwelt people who were wholly idolaters. Presbyters and deacons had been sent from the city to win them over to Christ; but, unable to bear the persecution of the pagans, they had returned without effect. The bishop, however, cared for them, and told his clergy that he knew of no person so devoted to God as Abraham; and, therefore, he would ordain him as an evangelist of these pagans. When ordained, Abraham began his work with fervent prayer for the Divine blessing; and, having erected a church, he supplicated in it for the conversion of the people. "Does not this church building imply that he had helpers? Then he threw down the idols and altars of the pagans, and was expelled from the country, with much ill-usage. But he returned to the village and resumed his work of prayer in the church. The pagans, astonished at his patience and courage, began to come and hear him; but when he spoke against their idolatrous practices he was treated worse than before. He bore all for three years, when they softened towards him. And when they saw how he lived, as he preached, they began to accept his instructions. In the end, he gathered them into a church and daily expounded to them the Scriptures. At length when he saw them established in the faith of the Gospel, and bringing forth the fruits thereof with steadiness, he left them for his former solitude. But the good work remained firm and strong; and the bishop visited and exhorted them from the Word of God, and ordained pastors from among themselves."

Now in the above narrative there are some very significant omissions. Nothing is said of any difficulty in finding men who could go and preach to these pagans. And yet he would be a bold man who would affirm that they knew the Greek tongue. Syriac was native among the country people, and these idolaters spake it. Suppose, then, that Greek had prevailed in the city, four hundred years, which it ought to have done if we accept the notion that it was so well known in the East before Cicero wrote and then add the effect of Greek Scriptures in educating the people of Edessa to familiarity with that language, the difficulty should have arisen of getting men who could make themselves understood by the pagans.

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to whom they were sent. And yet no word is said on this point. And when Abraham is selected for the work, the bishop who chooses him makes mention only of his devotion to God, but not one word of his learning as fitting him to enter into this mission. And then, when he succeeds, he can expound the Scriptures to them daily, and they make great progress in a short time. So, too, when the bishop visits them from the city, he preaches the Word to them without any note of change of tongue.

Now, our religious newspapers reporting a sermon by a Welsh preacher of note, would be sure to tell us whether it was delivered in English or Welsh. But in case of the preacher coming from Scotland, America, Canada, or Australia, no word is said of the language used, for English is common to all these countries. And, so, because Syriac was the language in the city as well as in the country around it, good men could go forth from Odessa to mission the idolaters in the open country of Mesopotamia. And the Bible used in the city could be used in the young church which Abraham gathered.

So then this account of successful Christian work comes in to illustrate Ephraim's employing Syriac to teach his fellow-citizens. And the two facts unite to show how preposterous is the claim of universality put forth for Greek, especially in the East. And then we are supported by the further fact that the Peshito New Testament had been now long in use in the Syrian churches. And, then, why the Itala or old Latin, so old that its origin is lost to scholars, if Greek could have suited all the churches? And this question applies to every version of the New Testament ever made. If Greek could have served the world, why make any translation in any tongue? But from the first century it could not; and so the Holy Spirit did not confine His words to this channel exclusively.

JAMES HOLDING.

FALSE TEACHING.

THE apostles of the Lord had barely finished the work of planting the truth throughout the world, when they were constrained to lift up a voice of warning to the youthful churches to beware of the leaven of false teaching which was already in their midst, and was destined to work sad havoc with the simplicity and purity of the faith.

"There were false prophets among the people," says Peter, "even as there shall be false teachers among you, . . . and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." No department of the truth would escape the corrupting touch of this leaven. They would "even deny the Lord that bought them;" while "the promise of His coming" would become to them as "a cunningly-devised fable." John also warns against the antichristian teaching which was already at work—the Gnostic "deceivers," who,

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while professing to be Christian disciples, denied "Jesus Christ coming in the flesh." Not less earnestly, and even more frequently, does Paul predict the same sad decline. With what solemn fervour does he beseech Timothy to be "urgent in season, and out of season," in his exhortation and teaching; "for the time will come," says he, "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, after their own lusts they shall heap to themselves teachers; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall turn aside unto fables." With what sad surprise does he find the Galatian disciples already turned to "another gospel" than that which he had preached. With what tender solicitude does he seek that the Colossians should be instructed only in the knowledge of Him in whom "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "Beware," says he, "lest any man spoil you [i.e., despoil you, make a spoil of you, carry you captive] through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

The frequent and solemn warnings and predictions, of which these are but a sample, terrible as they were in their descriptions of the extent of the corruption which would ensue from the germs of error already planted by the enemy of truth, were proved ere long to be divinely accurate. The slenderest acquaintance with Church History suffices to justify their terms. The very basis and vindication of our modern Protestantism consists in an acknowledgment of the fact that for centuries, which have come to be known as the Dark Ages, under the professed name of Christianity, the civilised world was held in the galling bondage of error, superstition, and cruelty, while "the meek and modest truth" was forced to seek a refuge from bitter persecution in nooks obscure, far from the ways of men.

It is admitted, then, that the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ was buried out of sight under the accumulated corruptions of the Greek and Roman Churches. Have our Protestant Reformations succeeded in restoring it to the light of day, and to its proper place in the minds of professing Christians? We doubt it much.

While thankful for what has been achieved, and rejoicing in the degree of liberty to which we have attained, it is our deliberate conviction that much remains to do. We believe, indeed, that one gross parent error, which serves as a foundation for nearly all the abominations of the Papal teaching, requires still to be banished, with all its progeny, from the creeds of Protestantism, where it holds a place of almost equal honour as the accredited basis of all true religion.

This error is the belief in the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, and the inalienable destiny of every man to live for ever in some condition or other.

This doctrine we solemnly declare to be no part of the doctrine of Christ, but, on the contrary, to be opposed thereto, and to be derived directly from that very "philosophy" against whose encroachments St. Paul raised a voice of warning. We further maintain that owing to the allegiance which professing Christians have sworn to this usurping theory, they have been despoiled and robbed of a great part of their precious inheritance of truth, and brought under the yoke of many and pernicious errors.

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The proofs of this grave indictment cannot be adequately presented in a brief paper. They may be found at length in those treatises upon the question which have grown so numerous of late years. It will be admitted, however, that if this idea of the "immortality of the soul" can claim no higher authority than human philosophy, its introduction into the Christian system of doctrine could not fail to have the most baneful effects.

Let us, then, see what Church History has to say about the contact of apostolic doctrine with the systems of Greek philosophy. I say *Greek* because, although troubles arose from other sources, the term "philosophy" in Paul's letter points distinctly to this quarter. "The Greeks," he says, "seek after wisdom (*sophia*)." Their eminent men were by profession lovers of wisdom, or philosophers, divided into various contending schools of thought.

I might quote from the writings of scholars who agree with us, but I shall rather call as a witness one who cannot be suspected of any bias in our favour—one who seems to have himself believed in the immortality of the soul—I refer to the learned Church historian, Dr. Mosheim, merely premising that his testimony is borne out by that of others. His "History of the Church" during the first few centuries is full of references to the disastrous inroads of worldly philosophy into the doctrine of Christ. But so far as the Greek philosophy is concerned, the corrupting influence seems to have come almost entirely from one school, viz., that of PLATO. Writing of the second century, Mosheim says: "Towards the close of this century a new sect of philosophers arose of a sudden, spread with amazing rapidity throughout the greatest part of the Roman Empire, swallowed up almost all the other sects, and was extremely detrimental to the cause of Christianity. Alexandria in Egypt . . . gave birth to this new philosophy. Its votaries chose to be called Platonics," because, "though attached to no particular sect, yet they preferred the sublime Plato to all other sages, and approved of the most of his opinions concerning the Deity, the universe, and the human soul." They were known also as Eclectics. "This new species of Platonism was embraced by such of the Alexandrian Christians as were desirous to retain, with the profession of the Gospel, the title, dignity, and habit of philosophers. It is also said to have had the particular approbation of Athenagoras, Pantœnus, Clemens the Alexandrian, and all those who, in this century, were charged with the care of the public school which the Christians had at Alexandria. . . . . The Christian Eclectics had this also in common with the others, that they preferred Plato to the other philosophers, and looked upon his opinions concerning God, the human soul, and things invisible, as conformable to the spirit and genius of the Christian doctrine."

It is important to observe how distinctly the Platonic doctrine *concerning the human soul* was thus adopted by Christian teachers. According to Dr. Mosheim, all the other schools of Greek philosophy—Epicurean, Academic, Aristotelian, Stoic—either flatly denied or openly doubted the immortality of the soul. The followers of Socrates and Plato alone made it the basis of their teaching. And it was in this second century, then, that that dogma as taught by Plato was for the first time incorporated with Christianity. And with the natural result.

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"The venerable simplicity of the Christian system," says Dr. Mosheim, "was not of long duration; its beauty was gradually effaced by the laborious efforts of human learning, and the dark subtilties of imaginary science."

"Many examples," continues the historian, "might be alleged which verify the observations we have now been making; and, if the reader is desirous of a striking one, *he has only to take a view of the doctrines which began to be taught in this century concerning the state of the soul after the dissolution of the body.*"

Time would fail me to quote at length the instructive records of the decline which rapidly followed. Suffice it to say that in the third century the cause of philosophy triumphed over the objections and protests of the better class of Christian advocates—thanks principally to "the influence and authority of Origen, who, having been early instructed in the new kind of Platonism already mentioned, blended it unhappily with the purer and more sublime tenets of a celestial doctrine, and recommended it in the warmest manner to the youth who attended his public lessons;" and that, so early as the fourth century, "those vain fictions, which an attachment to the Platonic philosophy and to popular opinions had engaged the greatest part of the Christian doctors to adopt before the time of Constantine, were now confirmed, enlarged, and embellished in various ways," leading to prayers to dead saints, worship of relics, and many other Popish dogmas and practices.

Protestants may, with some truth, claim to have escaped the particular forms of evil just referred to, which are still rampant in the Eastern and Western divisions of the Continental Church. But have they shaken themselves free from this heathen philosophy in regard to the more essential doctrine of immortality itself?

It was surely a cunning device of the enemy of Truth to induce the Christian teachers to believe that Plato and Christ could be served together. In one point the doctrine of Plato and that of Christ were coincident. On the same point they both differed from the bulk of the Grecian and Roman world. That point was this—that they both taught men to look forward to a future and immortal life. The chief remaining school of philosophers had no such faith; while as for the mass of mankind, Plato himself (than whom we can have no better witness) confesses that they "would not readily assent to his doctrine," apprehending rather that "on the very day in which the man dies, the soul is destroyed and extinguished; that it goes forth and is dissipated, like a breath or a smoke, and *ceases to be*" (*Phaedo*, 39, 40, 58, 68).

But while both Plato and the Christ held out to despairing men a hope of immortality, there was scarcely one feature further in common between their respective teachings on the subject. Plato taught that death was only apparent—that there really was for man no death, "what seemed so was transition"—that immortality was inherent in the deathless and indivisible soul or thinking part, and that the manner of its enjoyment would be by the soul's escaping for ever from the trammels of the material frame in which it had been for a while imprisoned. The Lord Jesus Christ, on the other hand, came proclaiming: "The hour is coming in which *all that are in the graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and *come forth*," and that of those who should

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be thus *resuscitated*, some should be appointed to life everlasting, but others to condemnation, and a second and irreversible destruction. He uttered not a word—neither did His apostles—of the immortality of the soul; He gave no countenance to human pride; but He came with a message of mercy from the God of heaven to sinners who were in danger of utterly perishing, and offered them freely a share in the everlasting life whose fountain was in the Son of God.

What possible communion could there be between two such opposing doctrines? None. And hence, no sooner was the Platonic theory received into the Church, than a struggle began between them for the mastery. And in that struggle the natural pride of men was all on the side of Plato, and against the "humbling" doctrine of the Cross.

One natural fruit of Plato's doctrine appeared at once in the rise in the second century of the Christian Mystics, who "were ordered," says our historian, "to extenuate by hunger, thirst, and other mortifications, the sluggish body, which confines the activity and restrains the liberty of the immortal spirit; that thus, in this life, they might enjoy communion with the Supreme Being, and ascend after death, active and unencumbered, to the universal Parent, to live in His presence for ever."

Thus the hope of the resurrection became dimmed and displaced, being reduced to secondary importance, and the way was paved for utter denial.

Without wishing to charge upon Protestants at large complicity in the vagaries of extreme men, such as the followers of Emanuel Swedenborg, yet it is right to inquire what place the doctrine of resurrection now holds in popular faith. It is notorious that among the Protestant Churches of the Continent, in France, Switzerland, and Germany, "the resurrection of the dead" is boldly and widely denied, and it is even considered a debatable question whether our Lord actually rose from the dead, or whether His resurrection was merely what they are pleased to call "a moral fact." It was long ago pointed out by Tyndale, the great Protestant Reformer and Martyr, in his controversy with the Papist More, that to send the souls of believers to bliss immediately after the event called death, was to make void and useless the coming of Christ and the resurrection, which were the true scriptural hope. And this argument has never to this day been answered. And in our own country, within recent years the same pernicious error has been propagated by theologians holding high rank, and important positions as educators of youth.

Let us look into this matter a few moments. Paul based the hope of a future and immortal life upon the fact that Christ had risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. Not so the theologies and creeds of Protestantism. As if they feared this Divine foundation were not secure enough to build upon, they start rather from metaphysical theories about the dignity of human nature, and the indestructible quality of the nobler part of man; merely tacking on thereto a doctrine of the resurrection, as authors are wont to relegate to an appendix matters more curious than essential, or which cannot conveniently come into the body of their work. Surely this is one of the strangest things done under the sun, that men, on whom has shined a full revelation of the path of life, should prefer to fall back upon "the

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rudiments of the world" for a guide; that those who have a living Prince of Life in whom to trust, should seek their solace rather in those unsatisfying pleas with which the dying Socrates, who knew no better, sought to comfort himself and those about him:

"Is Christ the abler teacher, or the Schools?
If Christ, then why resort at ev'ry turn
To Athens, or to Rome, for wisdom short
Of man's occasions, when in Him reside
Grace, knowledge, comfort—an unfathomed store?"

A year or two ago I saw in an evangelical magazine a frank confession that, in making the way of salvation clear to the sick and dying, teachers of religion were "apt to forget to set brightly before the eyes the resurrection hope." Apt to forget it! Why? How is this possible? Because a false hope has usurped its place. Can we conceive the Lord Jesus forgetting to set before the eyes in such a case His great promise that He would raise the believer up at the last day? Can we conceive Paul forgetting it—Paul, who protested that all his devotion advantaged him nothing, if the dead rise not; who, in instructing the Thessalonians as to the hopes of the Christian in death, passed by unnoticed the Grecian guess at immortality; said not a word about a spirit-world for the departed, but pointed forward to the resurrection of the dead and change of the living when the Lord Himself should descend from heaven?

A false hope, we say, has ousted this Scriptural one from its place. The creeds and theologies did half the mischief, but the hymns which convey the actual popular hope have completed its dethronement. Hence we find our friends singing, as if they had just quitted the bedside of Socrates, this "jargon of the schools":

"It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty.

It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise on strong exulting wing
To live among the just."

Truth is here, but not such as was intended, or can profit any one. It certainly cannot be *Death*, whatever it is, to "*rise to* LIVE among the just." Or, again:

"Welcome sweet hour of *full discharge* (*!*)
That sets our longing souls at large;
Unbinds our chain, breaks up our cell,
And gives us with our God to dwell."

Or this, which was sung at the funeral of one of our best Scotch Biblical scholars, the late Dr. Eadie:

"Hark, a voice! it cries from heaven,
Happy in the Lord who die;
. . . . . .
All their toils and conflicts o'er;
Lo! they dwell with Christ above.
. . . . . .

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Now they see Him face to face,
Him who s.ved them by His grace.
'Tis enough—enough for ever!
'Tis His people's bright reward.
They are blest indeed, who never
Shall be ab-ent from the Lord;
Oh, that we may *die* (!) like those
Who in Jesus then repose."

What need to multiply instances? Are there not sown broadcast by thousands for the use of young and old in our land hymns such as these, in which the resurrection is openly set aside as a thing unnecessary? Such sentiments are rank treason against the Prince of Life, who holds the keys of death and the grave. They would snatch from His brow the diadem that is His, and plant it—where? On the forehead of Death, that last of enemies; to save us from whom Christ both died and rose again! Oh, what impiety has this "vain deceit" led pious men to utter, let Dr. Young's daring couplet testify:

"*Death* gives us more than was in Eden lost;
The King of Terrors is the *Prince of Peace!*"

Dr. Mosheim mentions, as one of the early effects of the adoption by Christian teachers of the Alexandrian Platonism, that "a torrent of allegory" came in upon the church which nothing could withstand. "The doctors," he says, "who had applied themselves to the study of letters and philosophy, soon abandoned the frequented paths, and struck out into the devious wilds of fancy. . . Origen was at the head of this speculative tribe. This great man, enchanted by the charms of the Platonic philosophy, set it up as the test of all religion, and imagined that the reasons of each doctrine were to be found in that favourite philosophy, and their nature and extent to be determined by it." Again: "Having entertained a notion that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to defend everything contained in the sacred writings from the cavils of heretics and infidels, so long as they were explained *literally*, according to the real import of the terms, he had recourse to the fecundity of a lively imagination, and maintained that the Holy Scriptures were to be interpreted in the same allegorical manner that the Platonists explained the history of the gods."

It must not be forgotten that Origen was not the first in the field, although he carried in a new direction, and to a fresh extreme, principles which were already for some in vogue.

Thus, by this "licentious and deluding art," as the judicious Hooker calls it, Christians came to be, in effect, robbed of the very Scriptures. Do our Protestant friends claim to have escaped the evil effects of this process? Let facts decide.

Origen's motto was: "The Scriptures are of very little use to those wh understand them as they are written" [*Stromata*, Book 10]. Is that a doctrine unknown to Protestantism? Was it not just the other day that a learned and eloquent Canon warned us, with an utter misapplication of Paul's words, that "the letter killeth;" while another eminent theologian, north of the Tweed, told us that our attempt to rest our belief in conditional immortality "*upon the letter of Scripture* argues a misunderstanding of the idea of Revelation!"

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And are these not a fair example of the arguments which are brought against us in this controversy? It is no use to call attention to the general teaching of Scripture on the question. Our opponents are proof against any "array of texts," and ready to shelter themselves from the whole phalanx of Scripture terms behind the so-called spiritual interpretation. What though the Bible never once addresses men as immortal beings, or utters a whisper of man's possessing an undying or indestructible spirit? What though it speaks rather of the soul as liable to death, as requiring to be redeemed from the grave, and from first to last addresses sinners as those who have come under condemnation of *death?* What though it offers, *to those who will accept it*, that they "shall abide for ever," shall "have everlasting life," shall "put on immortality," shall become like the holy angels who "cannot die any more;" while it threatens those who reject this offer with being consumed, being destroyed soul and body, coming to nought, and perishing in everlasting destruction? These and many similar and harmonious forms of Scripture teaching are, by those who have set to their seal that Plato is true, made to bend to the dogma that sinners are all as deathless as the angels, or as God Himself, and that man does not require to be indebted to the Incarnate Son of God for the bestowal of immortality. But neither does their witness agree with itself; for, while one division finds that *destroyed* sinners are destined to be *preserved* for ever in hopeless misery, another, following the lead of Origen, teaches that, for a sinner to "perish" is to be saved from his sins and find a dwelling-place among the ransomed and the blessed!

> "Thus men go wrong, with most ingenious skill,
> Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will;
> And, with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
> *First put it out*, then take it for a guide."

And thus, by this philosophy and vain deceit, the noblest promises and most solemn warnings of the Word of God are reduced to a series of enigmas, hyperboles, or equivocations!

Oh, what despite has been done to the doctrine of Christ by this false teaching! If, on the one hand, the follower of Origen has robbed the preacher of the Gospel of the salutary "terror of the Lord," or has deprived the universe of a perfect moral Governor, setting up in His stead a weak embodiment of sentimental benevolence that threatens but does not execute, what shall we say of the contrary doctrine of endless sin and pain—a doctrine so monstrous and incredible that even its pledged supporters in our day are afraid to preach it openly? It robs the Christian of that "Righteous Father" whom Christ revealed; it casts a foul slur upon the holy name of God, putting Him to an open shame before even the vindictive gods of heathendom. It has alienated from Christianity some of the best intellects of mankind; filling some with a fiercer hate, and others with mute despair; and has given, oh, how much occasion, for the enemy to blaspheme all that is called religion!

One further point. The great promise of our Lord's personal return to the earth to give reward unto His servants, and establish the kingdom of God upon the earth—which cheered the apostles and early Christians—this, too, has been engulfed and borne away in that torrent of

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allegory which philosophy let loose upon the Church. Nor has our Protestantism recovered from the loss. What a variety of fanciful fulfilments are we not still asked to accept of "the promise of His coming?" But not one of them could for a moment stand were the true doctrine of immortality restored; least of all that worst one of them all, which makes the death of the saint the return of his Lord. For who that has learned that his only hope of immortality lies in the return of the Saviour from heaven to change his body of humiliation, and fashion it like unto His own glorious body, could ever be satisfied with the destruction of Jerusalem, with the endowment of Christianity by Constantine, with the mystical rhapsodies of Swedenborg, or any other stone that may be offered him as a substitute for the Bread of Life? Deprived of this—the polestar of the Church's destiny—she is adrift without due guide, and is in danger of making shipwreck among the rocks and quicksands of the perilous latter days.

We plead, therefore, with our beloved friends, to help us to remove this fundamental error, that, like a mist engendered in some unwholesome swamp, has succeeded in "darkening the whole firmament of truth." Restore the true doctrine of immortality, and you have the most potent weapon ever forged for the defeat of that Rationalism and its twin Agnosticism which are eating the vitals out of our modern Christianity, and every department of the doctrine of redemption through the slain and risen Son of God will share in the enlightening and gladdening effects of the liberation from the chains of centuries. Be assured it is the Lord's work this. "For every plant," said He, "which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Rooted up this error shall be, whether we choose to share in the honourable work or not. With the river of life flowing freely at our feet, let us no longer betake ourselves to the stagnant pools of human tradition and philosophy. But if we are disposed to turn lightly away from this inquiry, let us beware lest that condemnation be passed on us which was of old uttered against a people highly privileged: "My people have committed *two evils*—they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewn them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

M. W. Strang.

COMING TO THE LIGHT.

THE Very Rev. Principal Caird, Glasgow, preached lately in St. Mary's Church, Broughton, to a crowded congregation. His text was Matthew vi. 10—"Thy Kingdom come," &c. There were, he said, two distinct views of the glorious future in store for humanity which had at different periods dominated the mind of the church. There was the corporate view prevalent in apostolic times, and there was that by which that view had been gradually superseded—viz., the individualistic view of the notion of an immediate heaven for individual believers beyond the grave, which had become the accepted view of modern times. According to the former view, heaven was to come to them, and the religious imagination of that early time gathered round the anticipated consummation a thousand marvellous actions. The new Jerusalem was

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to descend from above, Christ was to appear surrounded by angelic hosts, the blast of the archangel's trump was to be heard, a great throne of judgment was to be set up. with all the machinery of a magnified assize, and a final separation was to take place between the evil and the good. But the essential element in all this Oriental symbolism was the idea that this world was destined to become purified from evil, and that an empire of truth and righteousness be establised upon the earth. According to the other view, believers were to go to heaven. They were to have individual immortality, and a pass to an immediate heaven of perfect blessedness in some unknown region of space they knew not and could not conceive, where, instead of longing and labouring for the coming of the kingdom on earth, there was thus substituted as a supreme end, as they said, the preparing for another world; and instead of the delivery of this world from sin and sorrow, the first and great concern of man, as they said, was the salvation of his own soul. Each of these views, he held, were imperfect and misleading when taken separately; a satisfactory conception must embrace elements that were common to both. In whatever form they might realise it, a spiritual perfection and blessedness in which the individual could share only as a member of a perfected society—in other words, a heaven to each, possible and attainable only through a heaven to all, that was the true Christian idea of the future life. Going on to speak of the individualistic view, he remarked that in regard to much of the popular teaching and thinking as to another world and the duty of preparing for it, there was no little force in some of those objections which had frequently been set forth by unfriendly critics. It had been asked whether as a motive of action which was the more potent—the hope of heaven and the fear of hell, or the hope of a sinless future for the world. One argument urged in defence of the doctrine of an immediate eternal heaven or hell was that they could not afford to loose it as a restraint from vice, while on ordinary minds the idea of a perfection and blessedness for the race would have practically no influence whatever. But even if it were right to keep up a belief in heaven and hell for economic purposes as a sort of supernatural police regulation, had it had on the average mind constituted a motive to virtue so potent as was here taken for granted? That belief had been before the popular mind for centuries, and he feared its practical results—he feared they must acknowledge that they had been of the slenderest. To the criminal class the dread of the policeman and the jail was an immeasurably more potent restraint than the dread of future retribution; and as regards the class to which most of them belonged, did not experience show that the sweets of present indulgence proved irresistibly more attractive than the most glowing pictures of heavenly happiness; and was not the dread of poverty, loss of worldly position, and respectability more powerful than the most alarming representations of the future woes of the lost? But even if by hope or fear of individual salvation or damnation a man's conduct was influenced, was there not this serious objection, that such a motive could not be regarded as either moral or religious. Religion did not mean to get men to act in a particular way, but to get them to act from spiritual and religious motives. The promises of happiness or threats of future retribution, if they had any influence at all, tended, by

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stimulating motives of cowardly fear and selfish desire to deteriorate and degrade. If love, and adoration, and reverence to the Being called God sprang not up spontaneously, then no effort of will, though men told them it would save their souls from perdition, would force it to come. The notion of a heaven of perfect happiness to be attained by each individual Christian soul at death was self-contradictory. What sort of a heaven and perfection would that be which was consistent with the knowledge of the continued misery and guilt of others? To leave these to their fate, and be content to be wafted away to some region of unbroken felicity, where the sorrow and sins, it might be, of the bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh should no longer be obtruded upon them—was that a picture of happiness possible for perfect souls? Did it find its nearest parallel on earth in noble natures; or must they not search for its earthly type rather among those whose affections had become ossified by self-indulgence, among the basest, meanest, and most odious of mankind? And could that which they condemned and despised here constitute the essence of future happiness of perfect souls? No! Christian love knew no individual heaven. For good or ill their spiritual fate was bound up with that of all others. The learned Principal went on to maintain that it was no mere humanitarian theory or fantastic dream to hold that this world was not for ever to be the home of evil; and that working for the realisation of the great divine purpose of the emancipation of the world from evil was a far more exalted and worthy endeavour than to be perpetually thinking of and preparing for going to heaven to escape for ever from this world with its sins and sorrows. Further, the preacher replied to the objections of those who urged that while individual immortality was a practical motive, the other was not; and pointed out, also, how in the glorious result each could participate. It was those who had spent their lives in efforts for the highest good of humanity that were now raised to the highest pinnacle of moral elevation. Even Christ's blessedness consisted in His self-sacrificing death for the sanctification of mankind. They would find their salvation, therefore, not in seeking the welfare and safety here or hereafter of their own petty individual selves, but in living and acting in the spirit of the aspiration, "Thy will be done on earth." Animated by such a spirit, a man could never be unprepared or be very far from heaven. Let death come when it might or carry them whither it would, in that awful hour he, and he alone, could stand calm and fearless before the dread mystery of the future who had centred the hope and aspirations of his life on the fulfilment of the glorious prayer —"Thy kingdom come; Thy will, oh God, be done on earth."

NOTES FROM THE DOMINION.

FROM printed papers sent you of late you will have seen that the great questions which form what may justly be called "The New Reformation," are largely permeating society in this region. The case of Mr. Brookman, through the intolerance of the Baptist denomination has given rise to thought and discussion to a remarkable extent. Mr. Brookman is a man of superior acquirements as a biblical scholar, an

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earnest fearer of God, and when about to be inducted by the Baptists as Pastor of one of their churches, knowing that his views concerning communion were opposed to theirs, and concerning "Life only through Christ" did not harmonise with current orthodoxy, yet they said that they could not allow a man of such transparency of character to be lost to the denomination. I may not give the exact words, but such was their testimony concerning this good man. No excellency of character, fitness or ability could, however, secure his position as the shepherd of a little flock, for he did not assent to the shibboleth of the sect. In all his teaching he desires to present to his hearers only what he believes to be the truth of God. I have been in his company a good deal of late, and find that amidst all his trials he confides his case into the hands of the Lord, and believes that "all things will work together for good." I forget whether I told you that the Baptists are now building a new Theological College in Toronto, and that the ground and building are the gift of the Hon. William McMasters to the denomination. But I lament to add that in accordance with a pernicious custom the creed of the sect has been interwoven with the Trust Deed, and that one item of belief—"*the everlasting misery of the wicked*"—is to be taught in that institution from generation to generation, and through its means this blasphemous libel upon the name of our Heavenly Father, is designed to be proclaimed from all the Baptists' pulpits throughout the land! The late Premier of Canada, the Hon. Alexander McKenzie, being a Baptist, was chosen by Mr. McMaster to be the recipient of the property on behalf of the denomination. He is a man who has risen from the rank of a stone-mason to the highest political dignity; but it is much to be regretted that he knows so little of the religion of the Son of God as to consent to entail upon future generations, by the fetters of a legal bond, a heathen fiction of horrors as the truth of God! Better that he had never been born than to be an instrument in proclaiming such a soul destroying dogma among the teeming population of this dominion.

Mr. McMaster is an old friend of mine, and when together many years ago in the same church, I knew his conviction to be that the Word of God was the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice; but in this case he has evidently been overruled by those with whom he is now associated.

Our Christian brother, Moncrieff, is much interested in Mr. Brookman's case; and we all hope that his remarkable case will be the means of spreading the truth more widely, and doing much good.

I received lately a parcel from Mr. Brooks containing a number of the "Rainbow" Tract, "The Dispensation of the Mystery," which I will put into circulation. I also had some tracts from our Mr. Laing, of Edinburgh, and was pleased to learn from his letter that Mr. Moncrieff is one of his most valued Christian friends.

I sent you a copy of the *Telegram* containing the paper read by Mr. Brookman before the "Toronto Ministerial Association." He was invited to read a paper at one of their weekly meetings, and he told them at once the subject, "*Life only in Christ.*" Professor McLaren, of Knox's College, was there when it was read, but he had never been seen at the meeting before, and he was the only one who then replied to it. Mr. Brookman remarked that the learned Professor in his reply quoted

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from the Grecian and Roman Philosophy, but entirely ignored the Divine testimony. At a subsequent meeting it was discussed, but none of the ablest members of the Association took part in it, and there was no report given by the Press of the proceedings. I hand you papers with Mr. Brookman's, and letters in another relating to it. There were about 16,000 of the *Telegram* containing Mr. Brookman's paper, as the Editor published an announcement on the previous day that it was to appear.

A simple-hearted Christian—a Methodist—wrote me lately that one of the religious teachers when presented with a tract on the "Coming of the Lord," said to him "It was of secondary moment," and another said that "any one who taught anything contrary to the 'Everlasting Hell' of Methodism was a dangerous man. Another, preaching from James v. 20, after declaring that conversion saved the soul from death, told his hearers that it did not mean literal death, because the soul was immortal! When the inconsistency was pointed out to him, "he got in a rage" at the Christian brother who pointed out the errors!

The pulpit occupied by poor Handsford some time ago is now occupied by one Dr. Wild, who came from Brooklyn, New York, U.S. He is emphatically a sensational preacher, and a man of ability, and commands large audiences. The leaders in the congregation rejoice, for the heavy debt on the building is being gradually reduced.

I have not heard how the *Bible Standard Association* is succeeding. It would be a matter of much regret were it to fail, as it is an important auxiliary in the good work, the publication being so very cheap. "*The Investigator*," published in Montreal, is the only paper I believe in Canada that upholds the doctrines we so highly value. The Editor is an intelligent and earnest Christian labourer, the pastor or co-pastor of a small church I believe.

I very seldom hear of some well-known friends of the truth, such as Mr. Dale of Birmingham, Arthur Mursell, H. Stowell Brown, and others advocating prominently those unpalatable doctrines in the eye of the orthodox. What is the reason of this? One would look naturally for their testimony through the struggling periodicals in the field of mental and moral warfare, for the honour of God and the welfare of man. I am told that Mr. Govett, who is the author of many good works, was once a writer for the RAINBOW. One work on "Eternal Misery" was given to Mr. Brookman, and from him I had a reading of it. It is truly astounding that a Christian of his acquirements should have penned such a work. It is like many others, a learned play upon the number of figurative meanings which may be devised on words, whose meaning in the ordinary or literal sense is plain to the simplest mind. It is calculated to confuse and puzzle any ordinary reader. I think Mr. Brookman has written the author, and hope that his eyes may be opened to see his error. Such a work virtually proclaims that Satan and sin are to triumph eternally over the God of holiness, whose wisdom, love, and power are infinite. The concluding paragraph of Mr. Govett's work seemed to me to be weak in the extreme. It resembles the last lines of a volume on the "Immortality of the Soul," written by a military man, which was once given me to read. It was in these words: "*If man be not naturally immortal, then Christ has died in vain.*" The truth is the

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very reverse. Because man is mortal by reason of sin, therefore Christ died to give him life.

It sometimes comes up in my thoughts, why is all this antagonism of mind among those that are truly the people of God? Is it to create among us a spirit of earnestness, of patience, forbearance, and love? Life we know is, while here, a training for eternity; and as in the physical world there are antagonistic forces for good, may they not also exist in the mental and moral world for the welfare of our being? May the Lord lead us to a more comprehensive knowledge of His will!

JAMES LESSLIE.

THE MAN OF SIN AND THE MYSTIC NUMBER.

I AM of opinion that all efforts at identification are more or less futile. Dr. Cumming (*clarum et venerabile nomen*) who not only identified persons, but fixed dates for the manifestation of the "Man of Sin," and the coming of the Messiah, has just passed away without realising anything but bitter disappointment. And, although the "signs of the times" are to be carefully studied and laid to heart by the *watchman*, yet such identifications have done a great deal of harm, not only by preventing God's children from entering upon the earnest study of His prophetic Word, but bringing the doctrine of Christ's Pre-Millennial Advent and Reign into ridicule. The two latest efforts at identification we have seen are the Czar of Russia and Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. If *seers* would content themselves by calling either of those individuals *a* man of sin, nobody would object, unless perhaps the last named gentleman. In detecting the "Man of Sin," may we not use the same method as John the Baptist did for discovering the true Messiah, when he sent his disciples with the question, "Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" The messengers in this case were told to observe what was being done by Jesus Christ, and were assured that John would at once know for certain who He was that did it. The works of salvation would infallibly point out the Saviour. So, if we are inquiring after the Man of Sin, let us but observe what he does, and we shall be sure who he is. Thus, for example, if, instead of law and order, we find insurrection; instead of God only wise, the wisdom of man deified and adored; instead of the liberty of serving God, which is the only true freedom, the liberty of disobeying him; instead of that justice and mercy, in which only man can be like God, the power of death, the delight of the devil, wantonly exercising itself in destroying men's lives; instead of laws for securing life and property, rapine and sacrilege laying everything waste; we desire to know what the true man of sin can do more. If there could be such a thing as an actual incarnation of the prince of evil, it does not appear to us that he could do more.

Whether Russia will be "the last great enemy," as is believed in some quarters, we do not know; but this we do know, that she is *a* present enemy. We are grieved to see the continued blindness and unbelief of God's ancient and chosen people; they have suffered terrible things in Russia recently. We think, however, that the present

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Czar has not the courage necessary to prove himself the *Lawless One*. Perhaps the time spoken of by God in Jeremiah (xvi.) when He would send forth His "many fishers," so as to catch His people with a bait, as it were, may be past, and now it is the "hunters" that are abroad to "hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." Paul makes use of the former idea in reference to the Corinthians—"being crafty I caught you with guile" * (δολω—from δελω—to catch with a bait).

On the other hand, Mr. Bradlaugh and his followers make it their boast that they are the most law-abiding of citizens. Of course it is not God's law that they pretend to keep. And we think the *real* Lawless One, whoever he may be, and whenever he may manifest himself, will not only break the laws of the land, but will trample on God's laws, knowing and believing them to be such. Hence Mr. Bradlaugh does not come up to the Scriptural standard.

"When the event brings its own interpretation with it, a child may see further than the most learned could before." And so many eminent names have been found to supply the *mystic number*. We think none of them come so near the spirit of Scripture as that suggested by Irenaeus, as early as the second century—Λατεινος (a Greek appellative, meaning Latin). The name is evidently to be looked for in the Greek language. The word *Lateinos* has all the characteristics of the name of the Wild Beast. It contains, according to the Greek mode of computation, exactly the number 666; and it is "the number of a man," for *Lateinos* (or according to its modern orthography *Latinos*, and in the Latin tongue, *Latinus*) is both descriptive of each individual man who inhabits the Latin empire, and was also the name of the real or reputed founder of that empire. After the fall of the Western empire, its inhabitants were called Latins in distinction from the inhabitants of the Eastern or Græco-Roman empire, who called themselves Romans. Their church was the Latin church; their worship was in Latin; the Scriptures themselves were read in Latin; the laws, edicts, and decrees, both of the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, were in Latin. The appropriateness, therefore, of the name Λατεινος to the Wild Beast who ruled over that empire is evident. It only remains for us now to count the arithmetical value of the letters forming this word:—

Lamba, 30; Alpha, 1; Tau, 300; Epsilon, 5; Iota, 10; Nu, 50; Omicron, 70; Sigma, 200—Total 666 Λατεινος.

"Herein is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, three score, and six" (Rev. xiii. 18). We by no means put these views forward as *the* true solution of this enigma, although backed by such authorities as Alford, Wordsworth, Bleek, Düsterdieck and De Wette. John Eward Clarke, in Adam Clarke's Commentary, rejects the above word on Philological grounds, and suggests "The Latin Kingdom," which is pretty much the same idea, and the Greek letters

* [It does not affect our correspondent's illustration when we remind him that Paul did *not* say this. It was one of the charges brought against him by his enemies, and he quotes it to protest against it. He took no advantage of the Corinthians. See 2 Ep. xii. 17, 18. Editor.]

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forming the phrase have the same numerical value as Λατεινος. But should the marginal reading in the Revised New Testament—some ancient authorities read, *six hundred and sixteen*—be correct; or Tischendorf's suggestion, on the authority of the Sinaitic M.S., "The number of a man, Six," all the above goes for nothing, falling at the same time—"Alexander, Czar of Russia." This may be one of the things that cannot be found out by "searching;" and yet to keep us in a watching and expectant attitude this little arithmetical puzzle may have been left the children of the kingdom, by their Elder Brother—the Coming King.

I am sure "T. M. B" utters the sentiments of every subscriber when he suggests the insertion in an early number of a good photograph of the revered editor of THE RAINBOW.

Salford. T. M. PURVES.

NOTES FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

I BEG to forward you Money Order for two pounds, being one pound for "Rainbow," (2 copies) to June, 1882, and one pound for "Rainbow Fund," which please accept.

If it will at all tend to encourage you in your persevering labour in editing that periodical, I may inform you of the continued and increasing interest I feel in its publication. I do not know how much I am indebted to yourself and the various writers for the joy I have in God through our Lord Jesus Christ: certain I am that it has been the means of expanding my mind and enlarging my apprehensions of the things that are freely given us of God, and during the many years I have been a subscriber it has yielded me a monthly feast, whilst leading me to value more highly the Word of God as a volume of exceeding richness, fulness, harmony, and beauty.

The tendency of the great bulk of the religious literature of the day is to keep the Bible a closed, if not a sealed book, whilst the "Rainbow" is one of the very few that excites a growing and intelligent interest in its wonderful contents, every such work therefore becomes increasingly valuable as the darkness of these closing days of Christendom thickens, and whilst the Lord will not leave himself without a witness but will in grace linger whilst there is a vestige of hope for an unbelieving world and an apostate church, we hope and pray (if the Lord tarry) you may long be spared as a light-bearer to hold forth and send forth the word of Life. I may mention that my wife as well as myself greatly rejoices in the truths advocated in the "Rainbow."

I thank you for your kind letter in response to a former communication from me, as I know you cannot have much time for letter-writing.

Religious matters in this colony are at a very low ebb indeed. The latter-day formality and pompous emptiness is surely upon us. The spiritual see it and mourn over it, but seem powerless to stem the tide, little dreaming in most cases, that being wedded to a system that holds tradition for truth, that defies reason and puts human wisdom in the place of Divine, is eating like a canker worm at the root of spiritual

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energy, and paralysing the spasmodic attempts at resuscitating vital godliness. Oh, that the eyes of more of God's children were open to look for the return of the rejected King, who alone is worthy to hold the reins of government, and who alone is able to bring order out of confusion. Adored be the name of Jesus for ever and ever!

B. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THIS GENERATION."

DEAR SIR,—Having read with much interest Mr. Mill's article in the June "Rainbow," on "Things that precede the Kingdom," may I be allowed to suggest another solution to the difficulty in Luke xxi. 32—"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all place this verse in connexion with the parable of the fig tree, after describing the signs that follow immediately after the tribulation.

Is it to this last series of events, which appear to develop very quickly until the coming of the Son of Man, that this verse applies? It struck me some time ago when pondering over this chapter and two parallel ones, that such was the case, and that all predicted in these last few verses, and which seem to form a period of their own, would be accomplished during the *generation then living*, living when these things begin to come to pass.

Should you think these few thoughts worthy of notice, I should much like to know if the reading of the passage will bear this construction. I am no scholar, but an obliged and

CONSTANT READER.

Bradford, Yorks.

THE MYSTIC NUMBER.

SIR,—Referring to the letter of T. M. B. in your last number, I would remark that the mystic number, 666, as recorded in Rev. xiii., has been variously commented on, and considerable ingenuity has been displayed in its accommodation to the names and titles of distinguished persons.

These speculations have been made, however, without an attempt to attach any purport to this number beyond that of the supposed solution of a mystery.

It may perhaps tend to set the question at rest if I point out that the earliest and most authoritative version, viz., the Sinaitic of Count Tischendorf, gives "six" as the correct number. The Revised New Testament, I know, retains the old numeral; nevertheless it would have been well to follow the S. V. for the following reasons:

The Scriptures afford no clue whereby to attach a signification to 666, and they do point to a possible one for the number 6.

Throughout the entire Book of the Revelation, the number "seven" is conspicuous as signifying *the perfection of excellence in the governmental ways of God in respect to the earth and its inhabitants;* whereas "six" is but "the number of *a man*" violently contrasted with that

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of God; thus leading to the perception that the brief span of power allotted to this Man, "Beast," or "Man of Sin"—though invested with all the symbols of earthly dominion, together with "the power, throne, and authority" of Satan (chap. xiii. 1, 2)—yet will be marked with iniquitous imperfection, coming absolutely short (6) of that righteousness of administration (7) that is contemplated in the Divine counsels for the future (chap. v. 6).

Yours faithfully,

H. GOODWYN.

Reading.

AN IMAGINARY DIFFICULTY.

DEAR SIR,—Can you, or any of your contributors, give some light on the subject of the Personal Presence and Reign with His saints of our Lord in this world? Speculation, of course, is worthless: but is not this a subject, like many other prophetic subjects on which reverent thought and consideration of such hints as the Word of God contains, may throw more light than at first appears? Talking on the Lord's second coming in a fraternal meeting of ministers lately (all of them except myself post-millenarians), it seemed to me that the real hindrance in their way, preventing them from yielding to the plain testimony of Scripture, was *the difficulty* connected with our Lord's personal presence once more. Horace Bushnell, in a sermon entitled, "The Present Relations of Christ with His followers," gives expression to the thoughts which, I suspect, were occupying their minds, and which probably occupy the minds of very many. "Nothing," he says, "could be more inexpedient, or a profounder affliction, than a locally descended, permanently visible Saviour. How much better a Saviour present everywhere and at all times." And again: "There is nothing, I must frankly say, that would be so nearly a dead loss of Christ, to any disciple who knows Him in the dear companionship of faith, as to have Him come in visible show; either setting up His reign at some geographical point, or reigning aerially, in some flitting and cursitating manner, which cannot be traced." On the ground of such thoughts, the Personal Presence and Reign seem to be set aside as inconceivable, whatever the testimony of Scripture. To remove these difficulties, or to alleviate them in some degree, more clearly than is done in any writing I have met with, would be a great gain. I venture to write these few lines in the hope that they may elicit thoughts from yourself, or some of your very competent contributors, on the matter, which may be of assistance.—I am, &c.,

U. B. R.

[The difficulty to which our correspondent refers is purely imaginary. But what have *we* to do with difficulties? The realisation of Divine purposes does not depend on human wisdom. We ask a reading of our papers on "The King," and "U. B. R.'s" letter will doubtless bring replies.—ED.]

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NOTICES.

"W. W. D."—We are sorry that your friend is so uncomfortable. From the symptoms it is clear that his disease is *sectarian irritation*. This acts injuriously on the heart, and affects the sight. But we will gladly prescribe for him without fee: Two or three drops of charity in half a tumbler of the milk of human kindness, twice a day, for a week, will cure him.

"S. H."—That Mr. Joseph Cook is an able speaker, and a clever man as a critical lecturer, is not to be questioned. But we could not accept him as a safe theological teacher. His doctrine of eternal evil is monstrous! If the passage on which he relies taught this, it would contradict the rest of the Bible; but Rev. xxii. 11 is *followed* by "Behold, I come quickly," which is the joyous note of confirmation and permanency to all moral good, and the herald blast of destruction to all moral evil. Men who seek popularity will go on the *old* lines of natural immortality, and its logical sequel of a fearful eternity for the lost; but men who dig for truth as for priceless treasure will go on the OLDER lines of Divine Revelation. They will stand where prophets and apostles stood. They will sacrifice pagan tradition without mercy, and be quite contented without popularity.

"H. B."—Thank you for £1 towards the cost of printing the "RAINBOW TRACTS." There are now seven of them, covering several of the points on which we are labouring to effect a theological reformation. They are being freely circulated, and are drawing the attention of many to the truth. Of course we are much out of pocket for printing them, but the precious seed will by-and-bye produce a harvest better than gold. Let us have faith and patience!

"J. P."—Of course Edinburgh has many superior boarding schools, but for young ladies whose parents wish them to be taught immortality only in Christ, we recommend the establishment of Miss Leishman, 3, Queen's Crescent, Newington, Edinburgh. We believe this lady is an accomplished and successful teacher, and as she has bravely suffered for the truth she deserves the practical sympathy of its friends. No doubt she will readily send a prospectus to any applicant, and we hope she may have several, for it is all important to preserve the rising generation from the delusions which we are labouring to scatter before the light of heaven—delusions which made the youth of many of us miserable.

"A. M."—We are tired of this endless complaint about the working classes not attending your churches and chapels. It is your own fault! Cease to teach them lies in the name of the Lord, and they will come. Try them with God's glad tidings instead of man's horrors, and your complaints will cease. Continue your irrational and unscriptural declarations about everlasting torment in fire, and they will hate you, and deny the being of the Holy One in whose name you utter the atrocious falsehood! Is it strange? *It would be strange if it were otherwise!*

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

SEPTEMBER, 1881.

THE KING REJECTED.

"A reproach of men, and despised of the people."—PSA. xxii. 6.

"He is despised and rejected of men."—ISA. liii. 3.

"Thus saith the Lord . . . to Him whom man despiseth, whom the nation abhorreth."—ISA. xlix. 7.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."—JOHN i. 11.

"When the husbandmen saw the Son, they said among themselves, This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance. And they caught Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him."—MATT. xxi. 38, 39.

THESE Scriptures tell their own story, and a remarkable one it is. History contains instances of the murder of the heir, and of the temporary success of the usurper, but nothing in the remotest degree comparable to this. Whether you consider the religious privileges of the people who were guilty of this deed, or the character and claims of the man they slew, you are overwhelmed with wonder and astonishment.

Above all the other nations of the world were the Jewish people privileged. They had light from heaven, whilst the Gentiles groped in the darkness of idolatry. Divinely inspired prophets taught them. A Divine polity ruled them. A divinely instituted religion was theirs.

And they had a marvellous history. Again and again had stupendous miracles attested that God fought for them. The splendid empire of Egypt was laid in ruins to pave the way for the exodus of their enslaved progenitors. The foundling of the Nile was closeted with God upon the fire-wreathed mountain, to qualify him for his extraordinary task. The Red Sea opened its waters to give them egress from the land of bondage; a miraculous pillar in mid-heaven, cloud by day, fire by night, was their guide through the pathless desert; and the Jordan divided to give them ingress to the land of promise. "And the Lord," says Joshua, "gave unto Israel all the land which He sware to give unto their fathers: and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them

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rest round about, according to all that He sware unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. xxi. 43-45).

Subsequently they were guilty of repeated rebellions against God, and were subjected to those chastisements which proved that He had not forsaken them, but still treated them as His children. He sent them a succession of famous judges to deliver them out of the hands of their oppressors; but though "He will ever be mindful of His covenant" (Psa. cxi. 5), they were "not mindful of His wonders that He did among them" (Neh. ix. 17); but in an hour of astonishing folly they wished to conform to the nations, by having a king over them. The conduct of the worthless sons of the illustrious Samuel, who was now an old man, was the alleged reason of this desire to put an end to the theocracy. When the elders of Israel came to Samuel at Ramah with this petition for a king, after the manner of the Gentiles, the aged saint was exceedingly grieved, and he did what we all should do—he prayed unto the Lord. "And the Lord"—who knows all hearts and all motives—"said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. viii. 7). Samuel obeyed his Divine Master, and under protest, according to instructions, did what the infatuated "voice of the people" demanded. The result was a remarkable foreshadowing—an impressive rehearsal—of what took place eleven centuries afterwards. Saul, the shadow of the coming Antichrist, was preferred to Israel's blessed Lord, as Cæsar, the ruler of the nations over which Antichrist will shortly exercise fearful authority, was chosen in preference to Jesus, the divinely-appointed King of the Jews. Seized, apparently, with a sudden fit of loyalty, the most turbulent and ungovernable people on the face of the earth undertake to remind Pilate of his duty to the Emperor: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." The Roman governor of Judea, surprised, or rather probably amused, at this sudden outburst of loyalty, said, "Shall I crucify your King?" Instantly the chief priests reply, in words of awful significance, "We have no king but Cæsar" (John xix. 12-15).

But to return. Notwithstanding this sudden national revolution, which superseded theocracy by monarchy, and preferred an earthly tyrant to a Divine Ruler, the Lord continued His mercy to the descendants of Abraham, and sent them prophets, men of God, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Great variety characterises the utterances of these teachers; but their chief theme is the coming and kingdom of the Messiah. Whenever they touch on this, their minds are rapt to a higher ecstasy,

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their visions are gilded with clearer light, and the splendour of their language sometimes becomes absolutely dazzling.

The result of this prophetic teaching was that the nation, amidst all its strange vicissitudes, fixed its eye on the promised Messiah, and He became the "Hope of Israel." In Him they saw the Deliverer, Redeemer, Ruler, and glorious Prince who was to restore the captive, liberate the prisoner, destroy the oppressor, and raise the kingdom of Israel to a condition of prosperity and a height of glory of which its surpassing grandeur in the days of Solomon the Magnificent was but a faint type. The golden age of the promised Monarch, sung in strains of unrivalled splendour by their David and Isaiah, was ever before them, their hope in sorrow, their subject of prayer, their theme of praise.

And you wonder? Were they not justified in cherishing these lofty expectations? Is there not an overwhelming abundance of evidence to prove that they had Divine warranty for these sublime anticipations? They could not do otherwise with those wonderful documents in their hands. Of course we speak only of the devout, the religious, the believing among them. All the rest must be set aside in an investigation of this kind, just as we set aside the ungodly when the sacred truths of our Christian faith pass under review. Such persons are incompetent to bear testimony; and, therefore, what they did, or said, or thought, is wholly irrelevant to the inquiry. That the hope of Israel, then, was placed before them by the God of their fathers, is beyond dispute; and I take this opportunity of protesting, so far as I am personally concerned, against the grievous injustice which is done to the seed of Abraham, when for the faith they cherished they are denounced as "carnal Jews." "The carnal Jew" is a convenient phrase if you wish to get rid of a great question by a word; but it is not applicable in this case, because it is not true. In expecting the Prince of Peace, and in looking for the first dominion and kingdom to come to the daughter of Jerusalem, the Jews had the very highest authority. In this matter, at least, they were not carnal. That inferior thoughts, erroneous notions, and unworthy motives associated themselves in multitudes of cases with this glorious hope of Israel is clear enough, from the simple consideration that human nature in the Jew is much the same as in the Gentile; but we Christians should not throw stones at the Jews until we wash our hands of the sin and scandal of making gain of godliness, and turning our holy religion into a commercial speculation.

Of course it is assumed that you have settled the whole question of the kingdom of God, and put both Jew and Millenarian beyond the range of argument, when you employ the elegant phrase "the carnal Jew." To say the least, this is a great assumption without a particle of proof.

In looking on the landscape of prophecy, whose mountain tops were gilded with the light of the Sun of Righteousness, the heart of

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the pious Jew swelled, and his hopes were strengthened to do life's work and bear life's burdens manfully. He was the better saint, citizen, patriot, husband, and father, for that look of believing anticipation. As he caught the reflection of the light he loved, his eye sparkled with fresh hope, and threw gentler beams on those around him. The coming of the Messiah, the Shiloh, the Heir of David, the Judge of Israel, the KING! Why what theme like *that* for a joyous inspiration, a radiant hope, and a vigorous faith? It made the patriot brave in the day of his country's danger; and it thrilled the feeble with a flush of fresh life. The lame, and the blind, and the deaf earnestly hoped He would come; for their great prophet had said, that "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6). In the gates of Zion, and in the tabernacles of the righteous, this was the ever fruitful subject of remark; in the synagogue it was read, in the family circle it was gratefully pondered. The virgins of Israel sang about it, and wondered much who among them was to have the signal felicity of being the mother of the promised Emmanuel; and the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, and her Nazarites, purer than snow and whiter than milk, held hallowed discourse as they walked through the vineyards of Judea, respecting Him who was to come.

Yes, they were waiting for the King, they looked for redemption in Israel; for God, who cannot lie, had repeatedly promised the great Deliverer, and with Him a great deliverance. And at last the long and weary centuries rolled away; heaven's chosen hour struck; "the fulness of the time" came—Christ was born. Four thousand years before God had said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The words had sent a thrill of joy through the drooping heart of the mother of mankind. Her soul grasped them with the eagerness of faith and hope, as she wept over and bitterly repented her folly and her sin; and as she gazed upon her firstborn in an agony of wondering love, she exclaimed, "I have gotten a man, the Lord." Alas! poor Eve, no. That is not the Promised Seed, the Destroyer of the serpent that so foully cheated thee: thou wilt have to weep again, for that fair child, the first born of the human race, will shed the first human blood; thy child will live to be a brother's murderer. Humanity must be rocked in tempest, and exposed to many a hurricane, and many a sea of human blood be shed before the voice of "the Man, the Lord," shall be heard hushing the stormy waters of the Galilean lake into repose.

And now that He has come at last, what is His reception? From all that we have hitherto seen, surely we are justified in anticipating for Him such a welcome as never was before accorded even to the greatest of woman-born. But why ask such questions

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when we know already the sad, sad answer that awaits them? Pharisee and Sadducee, priest and Levite, scribe and citizen, did *not* rival each other in profound homage to the King. The key of the house of David was not placed in His hand. The tribes sent not up their elders to Jerusalem to bow down in glad reverence before the prayed-for Prince of Israel. The golden gates of the temple flew not back to admit its great antitype to the inner sanctuary. The entire people did not celebrate a coronation of unexampled magnificence in His honour. Herod did not on bended knee lay his crown at His feet. There were no triumphal processions, no official hosannahs, no tribal congratulations. No. "He came unto His own possessions, and His own people received Him not." It is a blank, weary, melancholy, repellent negative throughout. It is the most dismal story of all stories ever read by men. The Son of David, the King of Israel, the Son of God is contemptuously despised, rejected, abhorred, murdered!

With all the faults, the follies, the crimes, and the sins of men, charity would have fondly hoped that there was something good about human nature still; but now even charity can hope no longer. The last proof is given, the final evidence is furnished, that there is no good thing in man. He has long resisted the Holy Spirit; now he kills the Prince of Life, and there is no more that he can do. In the way of guilt he can go no farther. The evidence is closed now, and will stand on the record through all the ages, for ever excluding the faintest hope of self-restoration from the abyss into which he is plunged. He must lie there in that dungeon, and die the death which has no hope in the distance, no life in the future, *if*—if what? What conditional sentence can possibly be used here? for man has killed the *only* Saviour. Is not that conclusive as to his utter and remediless ruin? It is, *so far as he is concerned*. Surely he will cease *now* to boast of his virtue and to parade his own righteousness. His lauded free-will has gone to its utmost limit, and he has cut down to the grave the only hope of his race. Poor, infatuated, disgraced, wrecked, ruined man! If good to the world is to come out of this, it will be entirely the work of God.

But why did the Jews reject the King? This is a question which I ask with trembling, as it rebounds with terrible force upon ourselves, but it cannot be evaded without injustice to this great subject, and I shall knowingly evade nothing which appears to me essential. The question, then, in compact form is—Did the Jewish rulers recognise in Jesus the promised Messiah? The answer at once is, They did *not*. But does not this greatly palliate the enormity of their guilt? I again reply emphatically, It does *not*. The reconciliation of this apparent contradiction is of the deepest moment, not merely as shedding light on one of the most mysterious passages in human history, but also because it has the strongest practical bearing upon ourselves, with regard to our manner of

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reading the Divine Book. As to the first question, we are not left to reason on the utter absurdity, the manifest incredibility, of the supposition that the Jews would knowingly put to death the very Being whose arrival among them was longed for through so many centuries as the hope and glory of their nation; for we have evidence clear as sunlight on the subject. Three witnesses will suffice. Peter, having charged his countrymen with denying the Holy One and the Just, and killing the Prince of Life, adds, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts iii. 17). Paul, preaching at Antioch in Pisidia, says, "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him" (Acts xiii. 27). And the "True and Faithful Witness" bears testimony under circumstances which make us bend our heads and worship. Amidst the agonies of crucifixion the holy Sufferer utters this wonderful prayer: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). These gracious words from the accursed tree reveal a depth of love for which we have no measuring line. Let them stand their own commentary, for no words of man can irradiate them with a clearer light.

As to the second question—Does not this proved fact palliate the guilt under review? let two things be remembered, first, that the Jews were *consciously guilty of the highest crime known to law*. They knew that Jesus was not guilty; they had proof positive of His innocence; their bribed witnesses contradicted each other; the bribed traitor in an agony of remorse dashed the wretched price of blood upon the ground; and the judge who handed Him over to death protested against his own act. Never was there a clearer case of judicial murder. There is no link wanting in the chain of evidence that envy, jealousy, hatred, were the foul elements that urged the rulers on to destroy the great Miracle Worker, the great Teacher, the great Benefactor of the poor, the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful. The life of Jesus was a glorious attestation of His holiness. Never can His murderers be cleared of the charge of wilfully and of set purpose, long entertained and deliberately planned, shedding innocent blood; and that, too, the blood of a man whom they knew to be the most illustrious and wonderful the sun ever shone upon.

But, secondly, the fact of their professed ignorance of His Messiahship, though admitted by apostles and used as a prayer on their behalf by the Divine Sufferer, *adds to their guilt*; for they should have known. Paul gives the key to this. They knew not the voices of the prophets which were read every Sabbath-day in their hearing, and which distinctly declared that they would be guilty of this very crime. Their ignorance was therefore altogether inexcusable. As a matter of fact, the rulers who conspired the death of Jesus *would* not know that He was God's Anointed. They

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hated Him without a cause, and determined to get rid of Him. "I adjure thee by the living God," said the high priest, "that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, *Thou hast said:* nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." What was the effect of this plain avowal of His Divinity and Messiahship? A charge of blasphemy and a sentence of death! The clear utterances of their prophets availed nothing against their malignity. Hateful prejudice had blinded their eyes. It was in the very nature of those predictions to defeat themselves—to prevent their own accomplishment; for the people thus forewarned, had they attended to the warning, would have shrunk back in horror at the bare possibility of such a deed of infamy.

Remember, we are speaking now exclusively from the human side of the question, the side of man's freedom of action; the Divine side, the side of God's sovereignty, will come before us hereafter, and the reconciliation of both will be found no insuperable difficulty. It is here, therefore, that the question arises, How came the Jew to be ignorant of the many utterances of his prophets respecting the sufferings of the Messiah? We have said that he gazed with fond imaginings on the sunlit mountain tops of prophetic scenery, and that he was divinely justified in so doing, but he failed to look at the valley of humiliation that lay at his feet; and for this omission, for which he has no justification, he is held up to all generations as the murderer of the King of Israel. He saw the glorious Prince, but he would not see the "man of sorrows;" he gazed on the kingly side of the vision, but he averted his eye from the victim-Lamb led to the slaughter; he exulted in the magnificence of Israel's future in consequence of the peerless character of her coming Sovereign, but he shunned as incredible the picture of that Sovereign "despised and rejected of men," and "cut off out of the land of the living." These, then, are the leading facts of this unparalleled case, stated simply as facts, without reference to any theological theory.

Do we blame the Jews for their neglect of so momentously important a part of the testimony of their inspired teachers? The great Master Himself did so. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke xxiv. 25). Had they believed *all,* they would have seen that depth of sorrow, crucifixion, and the grave were limned on the prophet's canvas, as well as a crown of glory, a sceptre, and an empire. Let the Master's rebuke stand. We need not add to it; for assuredly if we do the rebound will come upon us in full force. We Christians have for many centuries copied the men we blame, with this difference—that we have reversed their choice. Like them, we deserve the rebuke, "O senseless men, whose heart is slow in believing *all* that the prophets have said!" The royal rights of the Heir formed

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the theme of Jewish thought and speech to the exclusion of His foreshown sorrows and death. His sorrows and death, to the exclusion of His royal rights, form the subjects of the sermons of Christendom. To bring evidence in support of this statement would be absurd, for it is undeniably and universally true, and has been true ever since the Church left her first love and lost her yearning desire for the return of her Lord and His accession to the throne. With few exceptions the Church is dead to the royal rights of Jesus. The grave and the cross alone meet our eye. Christ "our life," Christ in resurrection, Christ coming to raise His sleeping saints, to change the living in the twinkling of an eye, and to make both immortal and perfect human beings, preparatory to the inauguration of His world-wide kingdom—who preaches these grand verities of the blessed revelation of the ever-blessed God? Here and there a man who understands the holy Book to mean just what it says; but the overwhelming majority stand aloof from the so-called contagion, and will not commit themselves to anything so unpopular as the regal rights of God's Anointed!

Well! Is the King to be rejected a second time? It would seem so. Nay, it has been done already,—done for some fifteen centuries, at least, throughout the length and breadth of the cluster of nations called Christendom. "Jesus is not good enough for the world," said Judea; "therefore cast Him out." "The world is not good enough for Jesus," says Christendom; "therefore keep Him out." And so the royal rights of the King are rejected by Christendom as they were by Judea. The Christian has united with the Jew in the protest against the reign of "this man." As the Jew explained away the prophetic descriptions of the Messiah's sufferings, or applied them to some other person, so the Christian has explained away the prophetic descriptions of Messiah's kingdom, or applied them to another world. The Jew thought he honoured his promised King by refusing to believe that he should be poor, and lowly, and despised; the Christian thinks he honours his Redeemer by refusing to believe that the "Son of man is coming in His glory" to rule over His own world. In the former case the Divine testimony was set aside to make room for a predilection; in the latter case it is set aside to make room for a false canon of interpretation. In both cases the word of God is made void by tradition; and in both the will of man blinds the eye to the meaning of inspiration. The eye of the Jew was dazzled with the glory of the King, so that he saw no Priest offering sacrifice; the eye of the Christian is fixed on Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Cross, so that he sees no victorious Prince ruling the nations, and receiving the homage of all mankind. A portion of the truth separated from the rest was the cause of Israel's blindness; a portion of the truth separated from the rest is the cause of the sleep of Christendom. Let Messiah come, said the Jews, and we shall expel the Romans and be masters of the world. Let Him

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stay where He is, say Christians, and we shall bring the world to His feet. "The unbelieving Jew," indeed! A thousand facts entitle Him to retort, "The unbelieving Christian!" for as the King was rejected by Judea, so the King is rejected by Christendom.

It is in vain to tell us that Christians admit the regal rights of Jesus, by saying that He "reigns in their hearts," for that is *not* the question under review; and it is equally irrelevant to say that He reigns in heaven, for that is *not* the locality in which the prophets of both Testaments behold Him on His throne. Nor is it any nearer the mark to say that Christians are anxious to see Him in possession of His rights by their efforts to convert the world to His truth, because from our hands he could not accept the kingdom even if we had it to offer. Twice already has He had the offer of royalty and refused it, because it came not from the proper quarter. On one occasion a great multitude were so deeply impressed by His miracles of mercy that they exclaimed, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." And the historian immediately adds, "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone" (John vi. 14, 15). He would not accept the throne of David, though He was Heir to it, through any popular movement of this kind. The other occasion was when the Devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said that he would give them all to Him on the condition of doing him homage (Matt. iv. 8, 9); but though Jesus was truly Heir of all that appeared in that magnificent vision, He indignantly rejected the offer. Not from the people, not from Satan, will He receive His throne. And neither from the hands of the Church can He accept the regalia of His great empire. Indeed, so far is this from being possible, she is a constant dependent upon His grace, and can take no step in the right direction without His constant guidance. In her case boasting is most effectually excluded, and she will never call His attention to a restored world with the words, "See, I have recovered this for Thee." Only from the hands of the Father, who hath appointed unto Him a kingdom, will He receive that kingdom, and all its glory. It is clear, then, that neither the reign of Jesus over the hearts of His people, nor the fancy that heaven is the locality the prophets assign for His kingdom, nor the theory that the Church is bringing the world to His feet, meets the charge that the teaching of Christendom is a rejection of God's Anointed. In fact, the doctrine of the pre-millennial return of the Lord is not only discredited by the great majority; it is opposed, scorned, maligned, hated, laughed at, caricatured by Christian ministers, just as the regal rights of Jesus were opposed, scorned, maligned, hated, laughed at, caricatured by Jewish priests. I am not quite a stranger to the literature of this subject; and, were it not that I find the fact predicted in Scripture, I should be amazed

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at the extreme enmity with which it is regarded. So intense is the prejudice against it that the pulpit in assailing it forgets its dignity, and the religious press its courtesy. Men will not reason with it, and look at it as a *possibility* in the all-wise arrangements of the all-wise God, touching the future of humanity; but they denounce, scorn, mock, as if these were legitimate weapons of Christian logic, just as Herod and his soldiers set at nought and mocked our gracious Saviour.

All this would be to me a matter of indifference, were it not that I consider the question at issue one of *supreme and all-embracing importance*. To this great world of sinning, suffering, and sorrowing human beings, it cannot be a question of slight moment whether its deliverance from the Devil and his angels is to be at the beginning or the end of ten centuries of time.

And now, what has been the result of this rejection of Christ's royal rights by the Church, this departure from a cardinal article of the primitive faith? Alas! a terrible apostasy, a huge and domineering ecclesiastical corruption, which has crushed and polluted the nations by its sway. Had believers, during all the generations since God's Anointed was rejected by the Jews, cherished the blessed hope of His return in glory, the evil thing we call Popery would have been utterly impossible. The triple crown, symbolic of royal and Divine authority, would never have been placed upon the head of a sinful mortal; for such sovereignty belongs only to the Anointed of Jehovah. This blasphemous usurpation of His royal prerogatives could not have taken place had professing Christians kept "the faith once delivered to the saints," and looked for the coming of the Son of God from heaven. And the horrors of the Inquisition, which make the blood of every reader of ecclesiastical history curdle, would have been unknown; for in that case the servants would not have begun to smite each other, and to eat and drink with the drunken. In one word, the denial of this great truth opened the door for the entire series of Papal abominations; and Protestantism, in general, follows the lead of the triple-crowned imposture in this matter. Alas! the Reformation left untouched the very source of that fell disease which has made Christendom such a blot upon the face of the earth, that nothing now remains for it but those tremendous judgments which shall herald the glorious kingdom of the twice-rejected Sovereign of humanity, and glorious Son of God. EDITOR.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No. VIII.

A Flash of Divinity.

WE have already said that the entire life of Christ was unique, and we return to emphasise this statement because we find

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that with that shallow insight which is often the accompaniment of depth of learning, some authors would identify Jesus in His long obscurity at Nazareth with any peasant boy or artisan then living in Galilee. He played their games, clubbed with them, wrought with them, giving no indications of His high origin and destiny. And there was nothing but peace and joy and righteousness in that village community, for His days "passed peacefully and happily away." Thus another contribution is made to the long list of authors who have conspired to fill the minds of thoughtless readers with totally false conceptions of the lot of the poor—a lot which is hypocritically commended for its freedom from the temptations and corruptions of wealth, and consistently praised at a distance, whence its enchantment is obvious, but those who laud it no doubt feel themselves unworthy to make it the subject of a close and experimental investigation. And the distance which separated Jesus from His companions mentally, was immense, which would alone be productive of painful isolation. We are expressly told that He "waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom." The examples of youthful precocity are numerous, but in the child Jesus there was not exhibited the partial and abnormal development of children like Mozart, Mendelssohn, Pope, Bidder, and Sir Thomas Lawrence—neither a prodigy of early culture, such as John Stuart Mill—but an all-round comprehensive development of every high endowment, which in the lack of any parallel we may just indicate as of the Miltonian and Baconian order, only that in breadth and depth and intensity it was divinely greater. And all these faculties were budding and blooming in the mind of Jesus at the very time in life when curiosity is liveliest, when desire is keenest, when questionings are most impetuous, when the heart and reason of things are probed after, with the invariable sequel of a deposit of sadness within the bright young soul, and a high purpose begotten of attempting some alteration somewhere where so much is wrong. Moreover, no man has ever yet lived to make an epoch in the world, or even a considerable mark upon its history, upon whom the shadow of his destiny did not fall in youth.

> "All his life, the charm did talk
> About his path, and hover near
> With words of promise in his walk
> And whispered voices at his ear."

In the case of Jesus there was the shadow of the cross, and the glitter of many crowns, and the vision of a worshipping and regenerated world. How grotesque it is to relegate the long thirty years which were substantially the human life of Christ to the category of ordinary peasant and artisan existence, as though to this wondrous and exquisite Being, who was the very flower of human perfection in all its capacities, there was given a narrow, dim-sighted, take-for-granted soul, suited to a cage, and without even a song to sing in it; as though we had here little more than an actual lamb,

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without thought of the before or the hereafter, or comprehension of the present, and happy to be left for ever in a fenced field!

If such was the character of the life antecedent to the baptism, we must connect with the waters of the Jordan the entrance within Him of Divinity, and the first appearance of the Son of God! but it was just in the infinitely greater measure in which His soul was possessed by the life of God that Jesus, as babe and boy and man, dwelt apart from all His associates in Nazareth like a shaft of light amid a dark pine forest. God consciously filled His soul at all times. Not intermittently, as to us poor mortals, did holy spiritual influences visit Him—not as sea-birds speeding to their island homes light awhile upon a ship, and soon have sailed away—but as the light is in the diamond, and though it be crushed beneath the hammer cannot be let out, so God dwelt in Him. The spirit of the Father rushed through His soul perpetually, as from His vigorous heart coursed the life-blood that daily swelled His stature. And it was because He had made that spirit His home from the first—because He had wrapped Himself in it as in a garment, had walked in it as the light of His life, had slept in it as His couch and covering—it was because the sails of His spirit had never before gone short of that wind, or His soul been deprived of that anchorage, or His wounds gone unclosed by that ointment—that in an awful hour, in which He occupied the room of the guilty, and the prayer, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" was in a sense denied Him, He reached the climax of His vicarious suffering, and made the air shudder with His cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

The mental distance at which Christ lived from His associates was less than the spiritual distance which divided Him from them, His parents included, so that along with the common experiences of child life, which He shared and sanctified, there was one less common in which He shone as a consolatory example. It is one of the saddest experiences of godly youth, trained in a Christian household, to make the discovery that in the eyes of revered parents prudence must be the largest ingredient in piety. The dear old saints of God who have weathered so many storms together, meet the ardent aspirations of the young disciple with cold calculations of probabilities, and when he speaks of faith they answer him by facts. If for their saintly boy there were a background of golden prospects, as saints show in the churches, then, indeed, they would not be anxious to lower his temperature—for the career of a saint with plenty of gold about him is obviously a safe one, even in this wicked world; but sainthood that walks in the invisible light of God's glory, and has nothing but high faith and aims to support it, cannot commend itself to prudent parents. Their confidence, if not their superior affection, will be rather given to that child whose conscience, less sensitive than that of his brothers and sisters, and whose will, so imperious that even they

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must at times bend before it, give promise of a competent and successful wrestler in the battle of life, one to whom they may look to uphold the fortunes of the family, and to nourish them in declining years. Throughout all His boyhood, and in a superior degree throughout His youth and prime, when it became no longer probable, but positive, that Jesus, notwithstanding prophecy and omen, was to be the failure of the family, He felt the gulf widening and impassable between Himself and those to whom He bent in meek subjection, but never bent so as to conflict with higher allegiance to God. It is by the light of this Nazareth life that we can best explain and interpret these startling sayings about kindred relationships which meet us in the Gospels. It is Jesus who had doubtless pondered sorrowfully the vanity of life when Joseph died, whom we hear saying to one who would first go and bury his father, "Follow me: and let the dead bury their dead;" and, again, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple," that is to say, the disciples of Christ when called upon to make choice of obeying the voice of God within them, or the pleadings of relationship for a contrary decision, must not hesitate to act even in ways that will expose them to the charge of hatred—that will appear to the misunderstanding world to be an evidence of hatred—instead of recognising the simple truth that the child of God loves not his relations less, but God more, and a Divine legation is given to such love. Across the Christian generations the child Jesus looks to every young disciple to whom the struggle between natural affection and Godward duty, between normal and abnormal right has come, and says, "Abide with Me" in Nazareth, but when your hour has come "Abide with Me," when Nazareth is left and your parents and kinsfolk seek you sorrowing, believing you are mad.

The time came when Joseph and Mary were compelled to look into the gulf that kept them from holding complete sway over their peculiar child.

The religion of the Jewish nation was doubtless designed to represent that perfect union of political and temporal advantage with religious motive and spiritual training which the religion of Jesus Christ, when universally operative among men, will vindicate to a far more glorious extent.

Every man among the nation was initiated into privileges by the administration of a rite. The people thus universally endowed with respectability grew up in the observance of customs and under the prescription of laws which had the salutary tendency to communicate to a family and a brotherhood a healthy and happy existence. Religion was exalted to its proper place as the chief end of life, but into that religion was incorporated such benefits as flow from adherence to a high political economy and to the requirements of sanitary and social science. The institution of slavery

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had been so crippled as to insure its disappearance before the time of Christ. The institution of property was crippled and restrained like that of slavery, and doubtless with the same intent. All law was on the side of the poor and the weak and the helpless. Cleanliness was made a part of godliness, and the clean people were all harmlessly mixed up together in their national festivals. Although they were born and bred to agriculture, which more than any industry provides a constant roundelay of change, the Jews' religion pointedly set its face against binding human spirits to continuous monotonous drudgery of any kind. The changes of the moon introduced changes in the daily life, and three times a year a grand holiday excursion must be made to Jerusalem. No Jew could be a piece of machinery, exhausting brain and muscle and soul's life in making all his days the eighth part of a pin, or helplessly tied Sunday and weekday to some monstrous force which crushed his manhood before it crushed his bones.

But how could the nation be prosperous when about three months of the year are spent in holiday-making? That, my political economist, depends upon what we understand by "the nation," and also by its "prosperity," and upon the admission of forces and principles which are unrecognised in the text books of your philosophy. Happy was this people when God, and not mammon, was its Lord. The ceremonies and sacrifices enjoined for the festivals had, as their secondary intent, the enforcing the obligation of universal hospitality, and a care that the people should have a regard for dumb animals; while they should all enjoy one good meal of unblemished meat, at all events, once a year. The priests were the meat inspectors. In order that the poor might have a sufficiency of animal food, the priests must manage to dispose of their portion of the peace-offerings by the second day; for, surely, if their own appetites were surfeited, they would not waste the remnant, but give it away. The distinctions between clean and unclean animals were evidently arbitrary, and meant to convey the idea that nothing was unclean of itself; for the swan and the hare were unclean, and the locust and the beetle clean. In fact, the whole system was a grand protest against utilitarianism. The most precious parts of the animal turned into smoke; carcases of good meat buried to be destroyed. What did it all mean? Why, this: that for a people to pay respect to God's commandments, whatever the matters upon which the obedience is exercised, and the apparent losses entailed, is to have made the first step towards the highest and freest human existence. And this admission of the locust into the family of the clean is really a most interesting incident; for the locust is an animal which, after incurring the penalty of death by its universal depredations, offers restitution in its own fat person to the first hungry person who finds it abroad. In times of national scarcity, the locust solved the problem of the distribution of wealth; it made the rich to feed many, and the poor to feed each other.

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But our political economist will be pleased to hear that these festivals, which seem so great a transgression of utilitarianism, were also availed of for purposes of trade and commerce. After religious duties came the fair. Jerusalem had its great festivals and its great fairs. Palestine had its Nijni-Novgorod.

Great was the interest excited in such remote villages as Nazareth when the passover festival came round. It was the time when even spring was young, and the country beginning to don its loveliest attire. The boy counted the years which were wanting to his majority, and longed to be able to join in the gipsy journey to Jerusalem. For Jesus that hour had come. To be sure He had found temples everywhere in which He could worship God. His soul was the loftiest and purest of temples. And He had seen through this Mosaic cradle of human spirits, which had become their grave, and longed to call men out of it to the free Life of His Gospel: but as part of His subjection, He endured to be taken to the passover, and as a boy He rejoiced in the excursion.

Christ a pilgrim to Jerusalem! Ah, but how many myriads of all nationalities He has drawn after Him! He went, pondering many things, and the shadow of His fate falling over Him as He drew near the city where He was to die. There He saw the High Priest in his splendid robes. From this wondrous person to George Fox in his leather breeches is a great step. It is the step that Jesus helped the world to take. Those learned old men who discoursed upon the profound trivialities of Rabbinical tradition, beheld a scholar approach them, a scholar that could talk more freely to them than to His father, so-called. They were more pleased when He listened than when He asked them questions, and the majority of them, no doubt, were secretly glad when the feast was over and it was to be expected that He would go away with His parents.

To the chagrin of many but the joy of some, the old men saw the lovely youth approaching again to sit at their feet, and when they had done speaking, propound His terrible inquiries. Many an old ear was thrust forward to catch His accents, and trembling hands would reach out to stroke His head, while aged lips faltered, "God bless Thee, my Son, Thou hast taught the old men wisdom; mayest Thou live to see the consolation of Israel!"

Meanwhile Mary had missed her treasure. So confident was every one in the kind Providence of God; so certain that there was help and friendship among neighbours and kindred, that no uneasiness was excited by the child's absence on the first days. A natural longing to *see* the Boy, however, craved forits gratification. Unavailing inquiry was followed by a sickening search, until at length faces were turned sorrowing towards Jerusalem.

Mary's instinct told her where Jesus was most likely to be found, but some mighty fussy persons, supposed to know everything and plentiful in reasons, led her to suppress her judgment, and wander

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aimlessly with her husband from street to street. At last instinct persisted in getting away from the guidance of blind reason; and Mary, first to arrive and first to speak, sees before her that Child before whom motherhood becomes somehow abashed. She never could deal with Him as with the others; a gulf was between them. Whereas, as mothers do, she loved to gaze into the eyes of her other children, He never looked earnestly at her but she turned away. Mark the deference of her language: "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

Mark the independence of the reply: "How was it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"—conveying to His parents the knowledge that He had of His unique origin and personality; and that, though He might choose to occupy the place of "Son," He was only properly conceived of as His Heavenly Father's Son, with a mysterious destiny to fulfil. Let no one imagine that Jesus failed here in fulfilling the part of a good and dutiful child. He came to be an example in every stage and relationship of human life that His Divine nature and mission suited Him to occupy. He could neither be husband, nor father; nor a child, like common children. His subjection in Nazareth was a long-drawn martyrdom. The voice from heaven that walked and talked with Him, told Him the hour had come when His Lordship should be partially revealed; but immediately afterwards He bent His neck to the yoke, and accompanied His parents homeward. Their lips were sealed upon the subject, and they allowed none of their relatives to reopen it.

Bristol. HENRY DEACON.

A MEDITATION.

The Knowledge of Good and Evil.

I TAKE it that in the statement of Gen. ii. 25, there is implied a something of much deeper significance than the mere fact of physical nakedness. Why mention at all an apparently simple fact? Does it edify? or is it necessary as mere history? But when the circumstances of the Adam are studied, we cannot fail to see that the Recorder desires to draw our attention to some important principle.

It is evident that as soon as the Adam had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they became conscious of their naked state; and we rightly infer that having done so they became ashamed, for they hid themselves: here we have cause and effect.

But why should such a physical cause as eating of a fruit produce such a moral effect as shame? Doubtless the physical action

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was the outcome of some subjective idea, and this the result of some sense perception, prompted by "The Slanderer," and it was remarkable as being quickly followed by moral consciousness.

Now "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for instruction in righteousness;" and as we have positive evidence of the authenticity of Genesis, we may be assured that the Lord God, in this religious history, desired to teach some sublime and essential lesson.

"They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." That this refers to their physical condition only may, I think, be at once dismissed; for why should the man and his wife be ashamed in their state of innocency? They were not conscious of guilt; nay, wherefore should they be so? Endowed with superior intelligence and moral capabilities, they enjoyed unbroken communion with the Lord God, they were in continual communication with the Good One; their thoughts and feelings were in consonance with His; they acquiesced reverently in the will of God, and in His prohibitory law. Their lives were spent in the enjoyment of good positively, and they had no knowledge of evil as an opposing force.

We may imagine their songs of praise, their hallelujah chorus, and their worship; how, amidst the luxuriant and gorgeous vegetations of that early world, under the bright and dancing beams of the sun, lord of light and life, they, with one accord, hymned sweet melody, and rehearsed, with voice upraised, the chorus of adoration and jubilant address. Nevertheless they were naked; but, being as yet *ignorant of themselves*, they were not ashamed.

Hitherto our first parents had been surrounded only by good; so far they had no knowledge of evil, for their eyes had not seen it, nor had their ears heard it; it had not, therefore, entered into their hearts to conceive it, for the impressions and emotions of our nature are conscious physical affections. Our first parents had had no opportunity of receiving a true knowledge of themselves: and yet, the true character of man must be manifested, as on the other hand must the character of God be exhibited to man. (Jer. ix. 23, 24). God made man upright, but in the very nature of the case he was capable of falling. The lesson, then, that Adam was to learn was this, that "There is none good but One; that is, God."

As long as the Adam remained in a state of innocency, they lived in continuous contact with all that was very good; but it is open to question whether they truly realised their admirable privileges: pride, untruthfulness, and sinful influences had not been presented to their minds; thus, all their ideas, feelings, and emotions ran in one positive direction under the impulse of the Lord God.

> "Their heaven-instructed minds at first
> No wish perplexed;"

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but it was necessary that they should be weighed in the balances, that they should be tested, so that they might have the opportunity of judging themselves. For this purpose the Slanderer was permitted to exercise his cunning: through an objective personal communion with Eve, Satan, always the lawless one, insinuated into her mind the spirit of discontent and mental restlessness, which, in Adam, was the rebelliousness of self-will; they questioned the goodness of the Divine will, and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

So far they had lived under the will of good only, as a habit; but now they exercised their own will or judgment, and chose to break a prohibitory law, which at once brought them into contact with evil.

Let us observe that the outward physical phenomena were expressive of the true inward conditions, but that their true spiritual state had, until now, been quite hid from the pair, because there had been no agency to develop the latent nature: they had all along been naked in the sight of Him to whom all things are manifest (see Heb. iv. 13), but were not ashamed, because by self-knowledge as yet unaware of the righteousness required by their Maker, and of whom alone it cometh (Isa. xlv. 24; liv. 17; 1 Cor. i. 30).

The tree of knowledge, like the tree of life, seems to have been emblematic. Of the tree of life we may say that it denotes the Lord Christ, the author of eternal life; but of the tree of knowledge it is more difficult to speak distinctly; we must, however, carefully discern that it is not spoken of as the tree of good and evil, but as that of the *knowledge* of good and evil. If we are inclined to consider this tree as emblematic of Jesus, may it not be as the Divine Man, representing in His unity the knowledge of the good and the evil (Luke xxii. 28; Heb. iv. 15); the first inherent in divinity, the latter inherent in humanity. Thus he that eats of the tree of life gets life, and so he that eats of the tree of knowledge of good and evil gets the knowledge of good and evil, for it is only as the soul knows Jesus Christ that he truly discerns the real character of the good and the evil.

As it is certain that God was willing for man to eat of the tree of life under right conditions, so it is possible, and indeed probable, that He also would have taught man in His own time the real character of good and evil, had not Adam been, as I may say, in a hurry to use his free liberty of choice, and to give credit to the devil, performing such faith and obedience to him as was due to God alone. It does not seem as if the sin consisted of eating of the tree of knowledge, but in eating of it whilst prohibited. Therefore, as the Lord God was willing that the Adam should eat of the tree of life under right conditions, so He was also willing that the Adam should eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil under right conditions. Lest they should take and eat of the tree of life

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under wrong conditions, it was removed from them; they did actually eat of the tree of knowledge under wrong conditions, and it was sin.

An objector might say: "Why should it be spiritually healthful to eat of the tree of life, and a sin to eat of the tree of knowledge, if both trees are emblematic of our Lord and Saviour? Does not God wish His people to have life, and also the knowledge of good and evil?" Yes, certainly; but only in His time, and in accordance with His laws; He wishes His people to have life in the right way, issuing in incorruptibility; He also wishes His people to have knowledge to discern both good and evil (see Heb. v. 13, 14), but at the proper period of discipline. (Psa. xciv. 10; 1 Cor. ii. 13).

The Adam undertook to discern both good and evil at a time when they were ignorant of their own selves, of their own inherent weakness to overcome evil with good, so were unprepared to meet the foe, wrestle with sin, and overcome; they knew not, until too late, that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and *naked*, and not knowing, they were not ashamed.

I believe that the Lord God would, in the course of time, in the case of obedience, have exempted the Adam from the natural conditions of corporeal and personal dissolution, perhaps by the gradual metempsychosis of the natural body into the spiritual; and, I believe, that God would have, in His own good time, so instructed and disciplined the Adam, that they might have eaten of the tree of knowledge, might have been brought into direct contact with the evil, and yet have been uncontaminated, *through overcoming*, even as Jesus, the second Adam.

This history ought to convey a lesson of self-application to every Christian. Should not every one ask himself, Am I daily overcoming? am I getting the victory over the world, the flesh, the devil, and above all, over Self? (See John xvi. 33; Rom. xii. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 19, 20; 1 John ii. 13; iv. 4; v. 4, 5; also Rev. ii. iii.; xxi. 7).

EDWARD WOOD FORSTER.
Darlington. Mem. Brit. Med. Assoc.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

CHAPTER VII.

GOD THE GOD OF THE LIVING.

LONG after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob died, God proclaimed Himself unto Moses from the burning bush as "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." What is the fair meaning of this proclamation? Does it import a living and abiding relationship? Or is it consistent with the dead patriarchs'

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remaining dead for ever? Let us investigate this matter as impartially as we can.

I. It is plain that this proclamation from the unconsumed bush expresses the *covenant* relationship into which God entered with His servants while they lived. It cannot mean less than this: "I am He who became the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the manner shown by the story of their lives. I am He who brought them into covenant with Myself." The reason why this proclamation cannot indicate less than this is, that in a more general sense God is the God of every living thing. Therefore must the words be historically interpreted before they acquire any speciality of meaning worthy of the occasion on which they were uttered. They as much as say to Moses: "Thou knowest indeed that I am the God of those sheep in thy flock, as I am the kind and faithful Creator of all the living things My hands have made; but thou knowest how much more than that I intend by calling Myself the God of thy fathers. I am their God in the sense growing out of My dealings with them. I am the God that called them, and led them, and cared for them; watched over them, delivered them, and prospered them; that tried them, and trained them, and brought them nearer and nearer to Myself; that conversed with them oft, and promised to them many good things, and sware to them that they should be Mine as I would be theirs, according to the words which I spake unto them."

II. Thus historically understood, as this proclamation must be, Is the truth proclaimed consistent with the indefinite continuance of the dead patriarchs under the power of death? Is there any thing *in the covenant* making it imperative that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob return to life sooner or later? Can God be true to His covenant with them and yet let His servants remain dead for ever? The conclusion to which we have been led by our study of the Abrahamic covenant is that there *is* a covenant necessity for the recall to life of those to whom the covenant was vouchsafed. The following reasons for this conclusion may be particularised. They mutually sustain and illumine each other.

1. God promised to give them the land of Canaan as an eternal inheritance; but in point of fact they did not begin to inherit the land while they lived: therefore they must rise from the dead that they may receive their inheritance and hold it for ever. An eternal inheritance requires eternal inheritors. The point to be guarded is that the land was not promised to the fathers solely as an inheritance for their children. God promised to give it to their seed, it is true; but He promised to give it to themselves as well. If He had intended the land for their seed exclusively, He would hardly have gone on to add the mention of themselves to the mention of their seed, as He did—for example in Gen. xiii. 15, 17; xv. 7.

2. The long discipline through which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

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were divinely led forbids the thought that their mortal pilgrimage was all their destined being. Abraham was under special training for at least fifty-five years of his life; and not until he was one hundred and twenty-five years of age was his faith made perfect. Are we to suppose that Abraham was all this while being educated for the grave? It cannot be. God ever most fitly adjusts His means to His ends; and having bestowed so much care and pains on the training of these His servants, He must have had some adequate use to make of His trained ones. And, therefore, either they are even now working and serving and worshipping while they are dead (which for the present we dismiss as on the face of it a contradiction in terms), or else He intends to recall them from the realms of death, to enjoy and consecrate to Him the being which was under training so long.

3. God said to Abraham, "In thee shall all the families of the ground be blessed." What! are all the families of men to be blessed in a dead Abraham? Besides, men are to "bless" him and "curse" him: will they bless and curse a memory? Will they bless and curse a man dead and buried and done with long ages ago? It does not seem very likely. Is Sarah never to behold the kings who shall have sprung from her darling Isaac? Is Isaac never to behold the "races" and "peoples" "bowing down" to Jacob? Shall Jacob never witness the "incoming" of the "Peace-bringer," and the "submission of the peoples?" never exult to see with his own eyes "the crown upon the head of him who was a Nazarite among his brethren?" If the patriarchs are never to come back to life, they can never have such fellowship as this with their posterity and with the nations in the blessings of that covenant which to them was granted.

4. Waxing more bold, we declare our conviction that God can be the covenant God of no man, and that man not live for ever. Therefore Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must rise from the dead and live for ever. It will take eternity to fulfil the gracious word: "I will be thy God." Thought cannot conceive of holy and happy men to whom God Himself must say: "I can do no more for you —be no more to you."

We conclude then that it is not consistent with the letter and spirit of the holy covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that God should leave the covenantees numbered with the dead for ever: THEY MUST RISE.

III. Our Lord's reply to the Sadducees (Matt., Mark, Luke) confirms this conclusion. He says that, "Moses showed in the place concerning the bush" that the dead are to arise; that Moses showed this merely by recording the Divine announcement which we have just been considering. Now if Moses "showed" it, this proves that it is to be seen in Moses; which assures us that we were right in discovering it there.

God is not the God of dead men but of living. Therefore the

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dead must live again. The relationship is in abeyance so long as the covenantees are under the power of death. But God anticipates their return to life. It is as certain as if it had already happened. To the clear view of His all-seeing mind, they are before Him as risen ones, glorified, incorruptible. Hence He does not hesitate to speak of Himself as still their God.

This is the natural meaning of our Master's words. It is *not* the natural meaning of them to take them as affirming that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are living while they are dead; for that would prove too much: *it would prove that they have no need to rise.*

Nor is the force of this consideration abated by the remarkable addition preserved by Luke: "for all live to Him." For, in the first place, if this is in the present tense, so is the other word "rise:" "But that the dead are raised, Moses showed." What! are the dead being raised as fast as they die? The meaning clearly is, "But that the dead are to be raised, Moses showed." And, therefore, the mere fact that the verb to "live" also is in the present tense, cannot possibly be admitted to import that there is no need of a resurrection. But, in the second place, if, as is probable, the words "to Him" are to be taken as governing this clause, still the same conclusion will be reached. "All TO HIM do live." "To themselves—to their descendants—to the world—they are dead; but, to Him who sees the end from the beginning, and speaks of the things that are not as though they were, they are living again; they have come up from their graves; they are enjoying their eternal inheritance; all nations are calling them blessed." To Him they are living: not yet to us!

Let the reader judge how much better it is to understand our Lord in this simple, unconstrained manner, interpreting His words at once grammatically, and yet so as to yield an entirely self-consistent meaning, than to follow in the beaten track, and confess with the Rev. Joseph Agar Beet (Expositor, January, 1881), that Christ brings against the Sadducees an argument "which has no direct bearing upon the resurrection of the dead." No wonder that this able and ingenuous writer thus finds himself at fault with the argument of the Great Teacher. Let Mr. Beet change his point of view to the extent of modifying one word, and all will come right. He says our Lord's argument "proves clearly that the departed servants of God still live." He should have said, "again live." They again live in the purpose and therefore they already live in the proclamation of their covenant God.

IV. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 16) confirms our conclusion that it is a covenant necessity that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rise from the dead. He says, "God is not ashamed of them to be called their God; for He prepared for them a city." So then, if He had not prepared for them a city, it would have proved that He was ashamed of them, and had repudiated the covenant by

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which He had bound Himself to them. And what does this prove, but that God Himself did not consider He had fulfilled His covenant engagements to them; else why prepare for them anything whatever in evidence of not being ashamed of them?

Nor has God promised the patriarchs one thing and prepared to give them another in lieu thereof. On the contrary, He will give them the promised land from the prepared city. This becomes evident the moment we drop a too easy but quite unwarranted contrast between land and city. The word *polis* does not warrant this, its meaning being not merely a collection of buildings enclosed by a wall, but "the whole body of citizens;" in a word, "the State" (See *Liddell and Scott*). The context does not warrant it; for there we find country interchanged with city. But chiefly the tenth verse remonstrates against our going wrong. Abraham "looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "The foundations" settle the question; for they were known to Abraham in his day. In a word: Abraham looked for the immortal state. He looked for the commonwealth of the glorified. He knew the Architect and Builder who would employ nothing less stable than the granite of incorruption and the precious stones of holiness. And Him whom he could trust to build the Eternal City, he could further trust to glorify the land of promise and make it a better land, even a heavenly. In fine, as the tabernacle of God is to be with men, so is the city of Abraham to be with his seed; and from that city the glorified patriarchs will inherit their glorified land. And so we see why God is not ashamed to be called their God: it is because He has prepared the essential means for making all His covenant promises good. God is the God of the living: therefore He will raise them from the dead that they may live; and that He may make good to them His utmost word.

JOSEPH B. ROTHERHAM.

GREEK OR SYRIAC?

[Nuts for the critics of the New Testament to crack, addressed especially to the learned men who met in the Jerusalem Chamber.]

1st NUT. Who collected the gospels and epistles into one volume, so as to secure from the churches its recognition, as what Origen first called it, "The Canon?" Tell us the name of the man who was the chairman over this business, for in the nature of things there must have been one if it was done by a company of learned Christians. Then say something intelligible about the men whom he engaged to help him. Were they old enough to have witnessed the works of Jesus Christ, so that they could certify the truth of such of them as were recorded; or, were they men unborn when He was crucified? You have the whole ante-Nicene Library before you,

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and immense learning on your side, but you cannot crack this nut; or, if you can, you are very long about it. The plain fact seems to be, you do not know who collected the first New Testament Canon.

2nd Nut. Can you tell the date within, say, five or ten years, when this collection of New Testament writings was made and completed? It would appear that you oscillate between 100 and 150 A.D.; but you give no satisfactory proof that this was so. Bear in mind that you are committed to the theory that the very first collected Canon was a Greek one. If you fail to prove this theory, and it should turn out unfounded, it may be that you are not so truly learned as you are said to be. Now, your pointing out that a very early Latin Testament called the Itala "was quoted by Tertullian in the latter part of the second century," and that there was a Syriac Testament abroad which was still older, avails you nothing, unless you can prove that both the Itala Latin, which Augustine affirms, in effect, to have been produced in the first century, and the Peshito Syriac, which really was of that early time, were versions from Greek. But, dear sirs, it is easier to say this than prove it. If you were to affirm that the Itala could not have been translated from Greek at all, because it abounds with Hebraisms and Syriasms, then we might hear you with patience. We could then perceive that its authors had very faithfully rendered the Peshito into Latin, and hence these signs of its source. And so, too, we could understand how Jerome, when like you, he had come to hold nothing good in any text of the New Testament except so far as it agreed with *the Greek* of his time, would pronounce the Itala sadly in need of revision. Now, then, you cannot tell to five years, no, nor to twenty-five, nor can you tell at all, when your beloved Greek was first gathered together.

3rd Nut. Where was this collection of Greek manuscripts made? You cannot look to Mount Athos, in Macedonia, for its great writing monasteries were not established till long after the time for which you are bound to provide a New Testament. Was this collection made in Alexandria? Why then cannot you get a good account of the work from some of the Fathers who lived there in the early centuries? Was it done in Palestine? Why, then, did the Bishop of Sardis, Mileto, who made a tour of Palestine purposely to inquire into church matters, bring back a catalogue of the books of the Old Testament which were accepted as canonical when he was in the Holy Land, and bring none of the New Testament? If he learnt that a Greek canon had been collected in Judea, he surely would have given its list of books as a companion to the Old Testament one. Then shall we go to Rome to find the place of collection? This will not suit. The very men who are quoted in support of the familiarity of the Roman people with the Greek language, had too well cultivated their own Latin for a Greek canon to suit Roman Christians; not to speak of the churches in the provinces. Then, since Constantinople was, as yet, nothing of account in Christian relations, shall we go to Antioch, the capital of Syria? Was it here where a Greek Canon was first gathered? That this city contained many men who could read Greek, we need not dispute, but that a Greek New Testament would suit the greater number of church members in and around Antioch, we deny; and challenge the

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learned world to prove that a Greek Canon was first gathered for their use. We do not forget the length of time during which Macedonian rule dominated Syria, and we trace its influence in the Syriac of the Peshito; but we deny the position that Greek did more than modify the native Syriac. Its influence was similar to that of Norman-French on our own English language. That there should have so early appeared even a version in Syriac and another in Latin, goes far to show that Greek suited neither Italy nor Syria. Then why gather it together in either region? "Oh," say the critics, "it must have been gathered in order that those *versions* might be made from it." We answer, prove that they were made from Greek, and your case will be a little more plausible; but even then it will not be unassailable; for it would be possible to get a Syrian manuscript of every book in the Peshito from the different writers; for they were all of them familiar with Syro-Chaldaic. But it has never been proved that they could all write Greek. And more; it has never been proved that they did write it in their first works. As to the Gospel of Matthew, which appeared as early as A.D. 38, the real evidence as to its language is all in favour of Syriac. That he also produced a Greek copy has been asserted, but not proved.

We sum up this third case, as to place of collection, by affirming that the critics who hold fast by Greek, cannot tell where it was done.

4th. Another nut relates to the agent by whom its editor could gather a canon from so many parts of the Empire. From Judea, you want Matthew, Hebrews, and the Epistle of James. Then from Greece you want 1 Cor., 2 Cor., and Philippians. Then from Galatia you want Paul's Epistle to the churches in that province. From Asia Minor you want Ephesians, Colossians, and several of the writings of John. Then where shall Luke's two works be found, since you do not know Theophilus, nor his heirs and assigns? And what of other short epistles, or those never sent to churches? Who shall search these out after those who received them are fallen asleep? We have two Epistles to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon; all the work of Paul. Besides these, John wrote two, but scholars do not know to whom they were sent. Now, some very highly qualified agent would be required to manage the collection of all the books of the New Testament Canon. Can our friends, the critics, point him out? If they can, they have a secret which they have not divulged to the world. But surely if they could have told us, we should have heard of him before now. We hold, and shall continue to maintain, that this nut is too hard for them to crack.

5th. Another nut to crack is this: What special need of the Greek-speaking churches called for the collection of a canon between A.D. 100 and 150? In this period persecution from the heathen Roman Emperors was at work, and this could not be favourable to the gathering of a canon. Now, this consideration is unfavourable to so arduous a work as getting up a Testament. Humanly estimated, one would suppose that the great undertaking must have been carried out when the storm of persecution was at rest. And then, how unlikely that the men in the church during the second century should have had so much superior common sense to that shown by the Apostles, if

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these allowed the Christian writings to be scattered abroad all their lifetime, but those wisely gathered them into one. We can hardly bring ourselves to credit either the apostolic men or the early fathers with so much superior judgment to any that is allowed to the Apostles by the critics. But smaller men, under pressure of urgent need, may do, and have done more work, yea, and greater than large men when not under such pressure. Then show us the special call for all the churches having the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles of Paul, James, Peter and John in one connected roll; and show, too, that this demand arose in A.D. 100 to 150. In this period you need to prove: first, your Greek manuscripts made into one volume, and accepted generally as of authority. Second, you want to prove that the New Testament Syriac, the Peshito, and the Latin Itala, were the work of the same half-century.

Now, when you join Christian churches who spake Greek with those who spake Syriac in the East and Latin in the West, you combine the strongest forces of the church in one earnest effort to possess a New Testament. Then how strange it is if, in the third period of fifty years of the Christian era, a work was done greater than the one which you, gentlemen of the Jerusalem Chamber, have done in ten years and a half by far more than five times, in labour and care, and yet neither any clear record exists of the workmen who did so well, nor of the reasons why they did it at all in so trying a time! This nut will be hard to crack.

6th. Another nut relates to ways and means. Who bore the cost of such a work? Whenever achieved it must have cost a great sum of money. Do we not hear of thirty thousand pounds being supplied by Oxford and Cambridge for the Revision now in hand? And this, too, in an age of vastly increased facilities for supplying the Word of God. Then, was not royalty concerned in the revision called the Authorised Version? And were there not one or two previous ones which Queen Elizabeth and Henry VIII. were concerned in?

In Germany from 1552 to 1555 the Peshito New Testament was edited and printed at the cost of the Emperor Ferdinand I. Wealthy cardinals have employed monks to make Greek and Latin manuscripts. Origen could not have produced his great Hexapla without the purse of the wealthy Ambrose. Nor was Jerome without a patron in Pope Damasus when he revised the Latin Vulgate. When manuscripts in capital letters were produced as they were centuries after 150, book-making on a scale large enough to give each church a copy, must have required much money to secure its execution. What man of wealth, or what union of many with small means, in times when Christians were being spoiled of their goods, could supply the requisite funds? It has not been shown that the church of 100 to 150 contained such wealthy men, or formed such a union of small sums as could pay for the work supposed to have been then accomplished. This then is, as yet, a nut uncracked.

7th Nut. What reception did the early church give to this Canon, which the critics assign to 100 to 150? We learn from Augustine how gradually the version made by Jerome was introduced into the Latin churches, and how Gregory I. had to use all the weight of his position as Bishop of Rome to get it generally accepted, is recorded

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by the critics. But what proof is there that even eminent men in the Greek Church took up and sustained, as worthy of acceptance, a Greek collection made before A.D. 150?

Irenæus is affirmed to quote one clause in John i. 18 three ways:

a. The only begotten God, which is the Peshito reading of this text.

b. The only begotten Son. A reading easily coming from confounding the contraction for *Θeos* in the Uncials with that for *Uios* son.

c. The only begotten Son of God.

This reading unites the other two in one clause. Now, surely, if this father who wrote in the second century had accepted a well-accredited Greek canon not more than fifty years old, he would have kept to one reading of so short a clause. Now since he wrote in Greek so near the time when the critics allege the collection to have been made, and is so strongly relied on by them, he ought to have known of an accepted canon, and not to have played fast and loose with three manuscripts of the same text. This nut then needs to be cracked by clear proof of such general acceptance of the Greek canon of this date.

8th. Nut. How does your theory of a canon made so late as A.D. 100 to 150 harmonise with the introduction to Luke's Gospel. It might be written after the Gospel was finished. But it tells us that many others were interested in having such a work prepared. This is the Peshiton account of what moved him to write. Then the Greek one comes down later, and says many had undertaken to have it done. Now Luke is evidently in full sympathy with these brethren and ready to enrich their collection of Christian Scriptures. For this purpose he wrote both the Gospel and the Acts. And the two works are dedicated to an eminent Christian, who clearly took a deep interest in the collection of Christian writings. Now, all this was long before the time when the critics who favour Greek, judge the first Greek canon to have been made. We know how they attempted to discredit the work of these good men, and picture Luke as writing to supersede them, but this is contrary to the record. He throws no slight upon them, but rather rejoices to help them. What less can "It seemed good to me also" mean? "They are doing a good work, and I am resolved to help them." Here is a glimpse of a canon as early as when Paul was a prisoner during five years. Luke was with or near him all those years, but the theory of the critics fails to account for this united labour of many hands to supply writings fitted to educate Christians of some standing in the Church.

9th. Another nut for the critics is found in the last chapter of John. There we find revisers who can certify to the facts contained in the Gospel. Besides these, and above them, is a chairman of revision, who certifies, in the first person singular, not to the truth of John merely, but to the glory of Jesus. Who are these men, and when could they edit or revise the Gospel now called in debate the Fourth Gospel? Observe what they say. We quote from the New Revision. "This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true." The commission which the risen Christ gave His apostles is given in Acts i. 8, "And ye shall be my witnesses." Now this certificate states that the author of the Gospel which they have in hand was fulfilling his duty as witness at the very time at which they are occupied with his work. Then of this work

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they speak as a former production of his pen. "He wrote these things." It is a work of former time, the aorist tense is used. And after this they declare of their own knowledge that the witness of this writer is true. Where will you find men in the second century who can say such things? John was fallen asleep and could not be described in the present tense as still witnessing these things after A.D. 100. Neither were men living then who could say we know that this witness is true. If we allow Luke to help us, we may find them actively at work on a canon in A.D. 60 to 65.

But the critics who uphold Greek cannot find a place for these men in connection with their canon. Men who speak as witnesses of such miracles as are found in the fourth Gospel must have been equals in age with Jesus Christ, who performed such wonders. But surely they did not live to be 100 to 150 years old, with powers of mind and memory fitting them to give such a certificate as this found in John xxi. 24. And then, Who is he who writes verse 25 in the first person, and knows so much more than either this book or others to which he alludes in chap. xx. 30, 31? He speaks as one who knew so much more of the things which Jesus did, than his fellow-workers, that he must speak of them in the first person. So he says, not we, but "I suppose that the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." So might one of the disciples who daily saw His manifold works. But for any other man to pen this last verse would surely have been presumptuous. This nut No. 9 is then too hard for the adherents to a Greek canon so late as the second century.

10th Nut. How does your theory account for the abrupt ending of the Acts of the Apostles? If it was prepared for a private Christian gentlemen from whom it was afterwards procured for circulation, why should Luke give Theophilus no account of the noble exhibition of Gospel truth delivered by Paul before the High Court at Rome? He had presented Paul in a most interesting light up to the close of the Acts. Theophilus must have wished to know how the appeal against the Sanhedrim would fare when it was heard before Cæsar. Luke was with Paul after his first answer. If then you are right as to the period when the books of the New Testament were first collected into a canon, the historian might have finished the Acts in a much more complete manner. Tell us then why he did not? On your theory this nut is too hard for you to crack.

11th Nut. How is the prophetic character of Jesus to be vindicated on your theory? In his last discourse, before a most representative assembly from all regions where the Hebrews were dispersed, just gathered to the passover at which He suffered, He spake the words found in Matt. xxiii. 34. Among them He declared that He would send *writers within that generation*, and that as they treated His messengers so should their doom as a people be. Now here, to make good His words we must find these people supplied, in some suitable language, with such writings as will give the Hebrews the means of searching the Scriptures in the light of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension; and of the teaching of His apostles as to the meaning of these matters. His words foretell a New Testament canon of sufficient dimensions to give every candid Jew the means of thinking rightly of Christ. But this must have been sup-

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plied in about thirty years; for the war, which ended in the very ruin of which He warned them, began in A.D. 66, and the city and temple were ruined by A.D. 70. Now what avails a collection of Christian writings made at your late date, on which you build, to make good the words of Jesus. You must show a Testament not later than A.D. 65, of sufficient fulness to answer the case here presented, in Greek or Hebrew, or some tongue suited to the people to whom Jesus spake, and show, too, that it appeared in about thirty years after His ascension. But your theory does not find one until about a hundred years too late. Now we cannot afford to accept critical systems which involve the failure of Christ as a teacher. He said to Pilate, "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

Are you bold enough to say that He failed in one material point in His last public discourse? If so, we cannot and will not hear you. But if you are not, then here is a nut too hard for you to crack.

12th Nut. How do you make clear the wisdom promised in the same breath with the writings on your theory that the apostles took no care to have the Christian Scriptures collected together in their time? "Jesus said, Behold, I send you prophets, wise men, and writers." In the exciting and most important gathering at Jerusalem, on the case of Gentile converts, which had been sent up from Antioch for settlement, James most emphatically called attention to the advantage which the supporters of Judaism possessed in having the Pentateuch read every Sabbath in their synagogues. And Jesus laid special stress on men keeping His sayings, even down to the last supper discourse. Could men who overlooked both the words of their Master and the good practical sense of their opponents be worth calling wise men? Where is the wisdom of men who left the precious words which they wrote under the strong conviction that those words had the force of the law of God, uncollected all their days, and died without appointing trustees to see to their being made into a canon? Is it not time that critics were rebuked for daring to rob the men whom Christ promised pre-eminent wisdom in the promulgation of His cause, not only of that wisdom, but of plain common sense? Peter, in his second epistle, chap. iii., clearly sanctions a collection both of the words of the prophets of the Old Testament and of the commandments of the apostle of Christ. On all the Churches to whom that second letter came He enjoins attention to this great canon, and that none might exclude Paul's writings from their reverent regard He gives them all special notice. But all this has no force with men who must uphold Greek, or they will be in the case of Shakespeare's Moor when peace was made. "Othello's occupation will be gone."

Have we not in the twelve nuts quite enough work for the venerable men of the Jerusalem Chamber? It may be that the home-land of Krupp will furnish crackers of such tremendous power, that they will demolish every one of the twelve nuts which we have presented above, and which now we shall sum up; but after watching the Germans for many years we are of opinion that they cannot crack our nuts and preserve the kernels. We repeat, then, our demand to be told by those who undertake to settle a Greek text:

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1. Who collected the first Greek Testament?
2. When was this done, say to within ten years?
3. Where was this collection of Greek made?
4. What active agent traversed the Roman Empire to make such collection of Greek?
5. What special need of Greek-speaking Churches called for this collection when it was made?
6. Who bore the cost of this Canon?
7. What sort of reception did the early Church give to this Greek Testament?
8. How does the theory of a first collection of a canon, in the second century, harmonise with the introduction to the Gospel of Luke?
9. What place have you for the company of editors found at the close of John's Gospel?
10. How does your theory account for the unfinished state of the Acts of the Apostles?
11. How was the pledge of Jesus to send scribes or writers as a final test of the character of the Jews, *before* the ruin of Jerusalem, redeemed on your critical theory?
12. How do you show that the wisdom promised in the same sentence as the writings was given to the apostles if they neglected to secure, in their own day, a New Testament Canon?

If any adherent of Greek originals from which every other early New Testament was translated can answer these twelve questions, let him do so. But if he give up the task as beyond his power, we beg to hint that they *can all be answered* when we follow the right track.

JAMES HOLDING.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. VI.

THE PROPOSED INTERPRETATION.

10. AS a first step towards a sounder exposition than the one examined and rejected, we must determine with ourselves in what direction the speakers—the Lord God, Jesus, and the Sadducees—bend their thoughts. That is to say, what vision rises before each of them? Not that of an intermediate state, so frequently adverted to amid the errors of our time, but of eternity itself, to which a resurrection is the door yet to be thrown wide open for the slumbering saints. They alone, we have gathered from the authoritive part of the reply, are the heirs of an existence similar in permanence and splendour to that of the loving Redeemer's own. When "at the bush" the Lord God pronounced the words concerning the Patriarchs, His mind, and we speak thus with emotions of unfeigned reverence, is occupied with the transcendent hereafter, overlooking entirely, as of infinite trivial interest, their tem-

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porary confinement and oblivion in the grave. We so describe it, for what are a few thousand years to Him who is from everlasting to everlasting? A speck, an instant, measured by the perpetuity of His being; and the same is also true of the life in store for His regenerated sons, through the ages of the ages. What are they to those who "know not anything" in their deep repose? Meditating on their condition as it lasts from generation to generation, *we* feel it waste and sad; to them, however, appertains no sense of duration, no perception of their lowly state. They weary not for the break of morning, yet it shall break; they pine not for release, but they shall be delivered; and when the resistless voice thunders at the portals of Sheol, "Come forth!" it will appear to them as if their eyes had just on that very second closed in the tents where they expired. To understand the argument, we must realise all this, awed by the overpowering spectacle as it looms into view.

In like manner, Jesus. He passes over, and for the same reasons, the brief interval of their suspended being, and "that world"—the solemn and unclosing future—meets His prophetic eye. He beholds all their destiny mapped out before His far-reaching glance; and just as His Father beheld the worthies, so did He, onward yonder where no night falls.

Even the poor misguided Sadducees, bondsmen of their early education and embittered prejudices, rose in their question to the same height, that of eternity; though according to their creed immortal life was reserved for no child of man. They likewise overlooked the years appointed for the woman and her husbands in the region of forgetfulness, and imagined them in the eternal world, so as for the occasion to stand on the same plane with the "Master" they addressed: "In the resurrection"—when she is recalled to life and enters on the unending stage of being you discourse about—"whose wife is she?"

Thus all the speakers, divine and human, are away in the realm of the illimitable hereafter. God and His Son, in the excessive overflow of a mighty compassion, speaking words that ought to bend every knee in adoring thankfulness; and the hostile questioners trying their best, in the hardness of their hearts, to thwart heaven's blessed aim, to bring reproach and derision on the Light of the world, and to shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

11. We now hasten to develop directly what we regard as the correct view of our Lord's reasoning: first, briefly in the conversational form, taking the responsibility of both interlocutors upon ourselves; and afterwards, having resumed the ordinary style, justifying the exposition, so as most distinctly and completely to exhibit the argument in its grasp, point and cogency.

Writer—Jesus affirms that the doctrine of a resurrection, rejected by the Sadducees, is taught in the words of Moses, "I am the God of Abraham," &c.

Reader—I accept the statement, but how is the doctrine established thereby?

Writer—Let us in the most reverential spirit imagine three *possible* human beings before the mind, or vision, of God, and ask ourselves the question, Would it be consistent with fact for Him to say, "I am the

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God of these three men"? Remember, that by supposition they have no actual existence, and may never have it.

Reader—I think He could not say so.

Writer—Well, suppose He has resolved to give existence to the three men who stand in vision before Him, could He affirm He is their God?

Reader—It seems to me not. It would, however, be perfectly consistent and proper for Him to declare, I *may become* their God, or, I *shall* yet *be* a God to them, regulating His statement by His unerring foresight.

Writer—Exactly. The language we might expect Him to employ, for it would be the language of truth, is just what you have suggested, —I *shall be* a God to them.

Reader—Well, so far everything is lucid and intelligible.

Writer—But take one step further: suppose that He has resolved to bring the three men appearing before Him in vision into existence, and also foresees that He will become their God, in the same way as He was a God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, might He not, by reason of His unerring prescience, adopt the words, "I am their God," since what His omniscience beholds in the future is as good as if it had already come to pass?

Reader—To the best of my discernment He might, since it is the Divine prerogative to call things "*that are not as though they were*," in virtue of the fact that they must at length necessarily come out of non-being into existence, or out of vision-being into real being.

Writer—Now, was God ever the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Reader—Yes; when they lived on earth in His fear and service.

Writer—Does He not say He is their God still?

Reader—He did say so "at the bush,"—"I am the God of Abraham," &c.

Writer—Then, if He who sees the end from the beginning affirms He is still their God, does he contemplate them as dead men—men bereft of consciousness *for ever*, as the Sadducees assumed they were—or as the heirs of a life to come; in fact, as good as living, or already resurrected?

Reader—As heirs of life; men once more to be—men as good to Him, when He spake from the centre of the burning bush, as if they were at the moment realities in His presence.

Writer—And if He contemplates them as heirs of life—as good as if they were alive—when He used the memorable words, what does that necessarily involve?

Reader—That they will all yet actually return to life; in other words, that THEY ARE SURE OF A RESURRECTION.

DEFENCE AND ILLUSTRATION OF THE PROPOSED EXPOSITION.

12. The pith and essence of the argument for a resurrection, it has been previously observed, is enclosed in the words, "I am the God of Abraham," &c., and that the additional matter in verse 37 merely explains the reasoning, or shows that the proof of the doctrine is contained in the language recorded by Moses. We are to suppose some

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such question as the following asked at Jesus by one listening to His repetition of the words spoken at Horeb: How does that establish your doctrine? The answer is given in two forms, substantially embodying the same idea, (1st) *negatively*, "For He is not the God of the dead;" (2nd) *positively*, "but" (*repeat* He is the God) "of the living;" that is, it would be meaningless language, an empty title, for the Holy One to declare Himself the God of the Patriarchs if they are eternally done with existence, since the relationship that once subsisted between them must, in that event, be regarded as absolutely dissolved. Their names are cancelled from the list of human existences. He is their God no more. So far, however, from the relationship being terminated, He declares Himself still their God; and since that is His own positive testimony, the inference to be drawn is, "then" (rather than "for") "they all live unto Him," intimating that He contemplates them as alive. To His view, in other words, they are as good as living men, because they will certainly *again be made alive.*

13. We prefer to substitute *then* in the room of "for," because the Greek particle *gar* seems to exercise an *inferential* force in the passage. As our version runs, the statement, "for all live unto Him," was clearly understood by the English translators to contain a *reason* in support of something that went before. What precedes it is, "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living;" and it strikes us as the most natural supposition that they held the words, "for all live unto Him," to convey the reason why He designates Himself the God of the Patriarchs—"for they all live unto Him," or for His glory, in the unseen state—according to the common explanation of these words. Now there is nothing very extraordinary in that. He was their God here below, and we cannot imagine that He would cast them off when they entered, as orthodoxy assures us they did, on the heavenly scenes, and were nearer Himself, and away from fleshly and worldly temptations, and beside the springs of perennial happiness. Well, suppose we pass that by,—comes up the old insuperable difficulty, with which we shall not again tax the reader's patience beyond a few lines. The difficulty is, the utter absence of any logical and valid connection between God being their God while they continue to serve Him behind the veil, and a resurrection for them at some future period or other. It is a demonstration that demonstrates nothing. It depends exclusively on pure assumption for any show of vitality it contains. "Made perfect in holiness," they have lived, so we are encouraged to believe, in exalted, illuminating, and blissful circumstances for thousands of years already, apart from any physical organism, and why not for ten thousand more? why not for millions? why not for ever? What we want, and what the blessed Redeemer provided, is a reason, not why God is the God of the three worthies, but WHY THEY ARE TO BE RESURRECTED. The reason is close at hand, and would soon be found out did not heathen fables and philosophising, baptized as Christian truth, hide it from observation.

But, to be done with the weary confusion and obscurity which soul-immortality creates here and all over Holy Writ, let the words, "All live unto Him," be taken as a luminous and welcome *deduction*, and the whole matter is simplified at once. He is their God, because *He represents them to Himself as living beings*, not as those who have parted with

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existence for evermore. This is the aspect in which they appear,—they are alive in the foresight and immutable purpose of Heaven. The vision of God—"who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. iv. 17)—the vision is, as it were, a prophecy to the Infinite Consciousness, based on His intention to revoke them from Sheol, the grave, the land of the enemy, and to bestow upon them in sovereign mercy an undying and angel-like existence. In other words, they will sooner or later be resurrected by Omnipotence. Had no resurrection been intended for them the Divine Voice might have said at the bush, "I was the God of Abraham," &c., because He would have viewed them as perpetually dissociated and exiled from life and Himself; but He testifies, "I am the God of Abraham," &c., contemplating them as sons yet to dwell in undecaying youth in His presence. Their names, then, are on the illumined scroll of "kings and priests," suspended from the throne on high. Their very dust is precious in His sight. Now they calmly repose in the "sunless land," not everlastingly wiped out of being; and He whose eyes never weary watches over them, as a mother by her sleeping child. For ages they have been concealed from all ken but His own, as if no quickening energy would at any time stir them into life, and love, and song; but, thanks to Him who planned their destiny "after the counsel of His own will," long long before the morning stars joined in their earliest hymn, that repose will be disturbed when the far-streaming glory of Emmanuel returning strikes on the eyelids of the tomb.

14. That the Greek word (*gar*) rendered "for" in the testimony under review often has the force of *then* or *therefore*, is susceptible of easy proof, proof quite intelligible to the mere English scholar. Take the following examples from the New Testament: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But (me *gar*) let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" (1 Pet. iv. 14, 15).

The word *gar* at the commencement of verse 15 introduces, not a reason for what had been advanced, but an advice, or an inference of moral obligation, founded upon the relationships and privileges just described; and the sense is this, if what is stated in verse 14 be true, "*then*, or *therefore*, let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief," &c. "Let every one"—(ekastos *gar*)—"of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" (Rom. xv. 2).

This verse looks back to the one immediately before it, which was, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Nor is this a reason in support of what precedes it, but a moral deduction from it: "*Then* (or *wherefore*, or *since*, *that is our duty* let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification."

So also *gar* must be understood in 1 Cor. xiv. 8,—"For if" (rather, wherefore if—*gar*) "the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" an inference from the general statement in the antecedent verse,—"And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how

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shall it be known what is piped or harped?" The conclusion is, "*Then* (or *therefore*) if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

In like manner, 1 Cor. i. 26, "For (*gar*, then, or therefore, inferential) ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called"—call you?

Likewise in Jas. ii. 26, *gar* does not lead into view a consideration in support of what has been said, but carries an inferential power, the deduction being founded on the argumentation in the previous verses: "For (*gar*, then) as the body without the spirit (*margin*, breath) is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

In the above, we are bold to think there is ample justification for the alteration proposed, "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" "then," or *since that* is so, "they all live unto Him."

15. In support of the meaning given to the words, "they all live unto Him,"—they appear unto Him alive—they are as good as alive in the Omniscient prevision—we beg leave to repeat the observation, that it is a common form or figure of speech in the Bible, as with ourselves, to make mention of things which are sure to happen as if they were now in existence, or had already come to pass. Even in the record of this incident there are, memory should teach us, examples of this peculiarity: "in the resurrection whose wife *is* she?" that is, whose wife shall she be? and, "Now that the dead *are* raised," that is, will be raised. Any number of illustrations can be assembled to the same effect, of which we must be permitted to detail a few: "Thou art but a dead man;" Gen. xx. 3, and at the moment the man was living, but he was as good as dead. "We be all dead men," Exod. xii. 33; and the men themselves said so. In their own eyes, however, they were *as good as dead*, for they—the Egyptians—felt that they were sure to perish in one way or another if the children of Israel tarried longer in Pharaoh's land.

On the very day on which this section was composed, the author, on inquiring of a friend how a prominent citizen, in great trouble at the time, was, got this reply: "He is sinking fast; Mr. —— is a dead man;" the meaning of which no one surely can misapprehend.

Now, if living men in most perilous circumstances are called dead men, why may not dead men, who are sure to be revived, pass under the description of living men, and more especially by Him who is the fountain of resurrection energy?

Another illustration is provided for our guidance in Luke ix. 60, where Jesus says, "Let the dead bury their dead."

Those who were said to entomb the dead man are said to be in a similar condition—"dead also;" in other words, the condition of the living referred to bore a certain and close similitude to that of the departed. There is no difficulty in tracing where a resemblance between them did *not* hold; and it remains to discover in what the resemblance indicated did consist. It has been said the living were spiritually dead, meaning thereby that to the claims and attractions of God, or of holiness, which is only another method of expressing the same idea, the relations of the deceased were as indifferent and insensible as the corpse in their presence was to a friendly entreaty, and all other objects of perception. They felt these obligations no more than if they were absolutely

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incapable of acknowledging them; yet they were very far from being incapable, and were therefore charged with the heinous transgression of not loving God and submitting to His will. But even if we concede this to be a truly accurate moral description of each unconverted human being, it does not appear to reach and indicate the force and warrant of our Lord's address. We shall best approach what seems to be the exact idea if we hold in mind that "the wages of sin is death," of which the death that had fallen on the disciple's relative in the distance was, so far as its essential properties were concerned, a perfect representation. He was dead—bereft of feeling and consciousness; and there in no need to suppose that the speaker had any reference whatever to his final destiny. To his present state, that of his friends and neighbours who would perform the last offices on his behalf was likened—they were dead. By His infallible knowledge, Jesus understood their spiritual state; knew they were "children of wrath," inasmuch as they had not welcomed Himself as the heavenly-appointed, life-giving Saviour. The sentence of death was resting on them; they were "condemned already," and so were as good as dead, for sooner or later, by Divine authority, the sentence would be carried into execution. Their names, He knew, were not written in the book of life; in other words, they were in an irregenerate, unspiritualised, unsaved condition, and according to immutable Gospel regulations, physical destruction—non-being—was the only doom in reserve for them at last. We understand our Lord merely to speak of their condition and prospects as His perception of their condition determined them at the moment. He does not predict their end, only the end in store for them on the supposition that they continued as He then beheld them and measured their relations to His Father and the disclosures of infinite pity. They were then under sentence of death, the execution of which, after the great assize, would reduce them *for ever* to the condition of the man whose remains were awaiting interment. Whether it would be carried into effect was, of course, still a matter of choice on their part; an opportunity of finding mercy not being yet irrevocably gone in their case.

Of the same figure of speech another example occurs in Acts xviii. 9: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; 10: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: *for I have much people in this city.*"

The great Apostle, in consequence of the manner in which the Jews at Corinth treated the Gospel, said to his railing kindred, "Your blood"—*not*, be it observed, *your eternal misery*, but "your blood," your death, that is, the blame of your death—"be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles" (v. 6). But it was the Lord's pleasure that His messenger should tarry in the locality, and assigned this as the reason: "*I have much people in this city.*" As yet, however, they were degraded idolaters; at a great distance from being literally His people; but Omniscience foresaw that at length they *would be converted* to the faith. That was calling things which were not "as though they were;" and He whose eye is familiar with past, present and future, may adopt this style without danger of the least mistake.

Quite similar is that expression used by our Lord in John x. 16:

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"*Other sheep I have*, which are not of this fold (flock); them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold (flock) and one Shepherd." Here, "sheep" is exactly parallel to "people" in the verse from Acts just remarked upon. The then existing flock were believing Jews; those who had accepted Him as the promised Messiah, and were enjoying the peace, and hope, and power of the Gospel. But the glad tidings were not to be restricted to the Abrahamic line; for "God so loved the WORLD that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). Ere long the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was to be broken down—foreshadowed in the mission of Elijah to the widow of Sarepta, and of Elisha to Naaman the Syrian—that the heathen might be invited to enrolment as fellow-citizens with the regenerate of the chosen race. The "other sheep" here spoken of were those among the nations who would judge themselves worthy of everlasting life, or fit objects of God's sovereign mercy; and by the simple exercise of faith in the heavenly message, be translated from the kingdom of darkness into that of the Messiah. They are called "sheep," and Jesus owned them anticipatively. Many who were converted soon after His ascension lived, while the discourse was uttered, in the enslavement of sin, and millions more of them were still unborn; for the vision then before the Saviour's mind stretched onward, as we know, for at least well nigh 1,900 years. Nevertheless they are styled "sheep" even at the date of our Lord's address, because sooner or later what was foreseen in their history would surely come to pass. They, by the strange compulsion of redeeming love, would become members of His spiritual flock, and like the Christianised Jews, and with them, go out and in and find pasture: one flock ultimately, under the care of the one all-glorious Shepherd.

All acquainted with the prophetic books will readily detect the same style of address as one of their commonest features. Innumerable events are spoken of as if they were already actualized, hundreds of years before they became facts in history. Take for instance the 53rd chapter of Isaiah and 7th verse, "He was oppressed" (the past tense) "and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought" (the present tense) "as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so He opened not His mouth." These occurrences, and others of an equally specific character mentioned in the same oracle, are treated as past events, or as events just transpiring, thereby indicating to every pious mind that they could not fail of a literal minute accomplishment in the life and sorrows and triumphs of Messiah, whenever He should be presented to mankind. And did they not all, without the shadow of failure, come to pass? The form of expression, then, is based on the certainty of fulfilment, and is so to speak, a pledge and prelude of it.

Turn we now to the passage in hand. The dead Patriarchs appear to the Divine consciousness as living—"they all live unto Him," and that is therefore tantamount to a direct prophecy of a resurrection for them, which will inevitably be accomplished. At the commencement of His reply, the Lord had uttered several predictions, in which He announced that those worthy to enter on the new age by a resurrection from among

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the dead, would neither marry nor be given in marriage—would be sons of God, on a par with the angels in heaven, and incapable of dying; and this, the vision of them in the radiance of immortal life, or the statement "they all live unto Him," is but another revelation concerning the future, depending on faithfulness and power of the Supreme at length to give actual being to those who were seen and described in the far past as if they even then had it—the immortal life—already in possession.

16. While we regard the words, "For all live unto Him," as a deduction, and have substituted *then* in place of "for," the doctrine of Jesus may be evolved, though in a slightly different manner, should the ratiocinative construction be preferred to the inferential; in other words, should "for" be retained in the statement, "*for* all live unto Him," on the supposition that it introduces a reason. In that event, we suggest the first "for" in verse 38 ought to be changed into "now," as the same Greek word (*de*) is rendered at the commencement of verse 37. This will avoid the introduction of "for" two times in verse 38, as the authorized translation runs. With this slight alteration, verse 38 will then read,—"Now He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto Him." Were we to regard this as the most correct manifestation of the Lord's mind in English, we should exhibit the complete argument from Luke's Gospel, in an expanded shape, thus: Now (*de*) that the dead are, or will be raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when He called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now,—as if he had said, Think of this,—God cannot be the God of men dead for ever, He can only be the God of living men; and they are spoken of as living men, "For," or because, "they all live unto Him," meaning that He contemplates them at the moment when He calls Himself their God, as alive—as good as alive—and not as those who have departed eternally from existence; and since when He foresees, or beholds as it will be, sooner or later must be, the resurrection of the Patriarchs is an event certain to occur at the time appointed.

(*To be continued.*)

THE VICTORY OVER DEATH.

FRIENDS fall asleep; and, like the night,
Death spreads a cloud athwart the light;
The portal opens to the tomb,
And mourners feel how dark the gloom!

But Faith can see, where unbelief
Discerns no antidote to grief.
The cloud so dark to Pharaoh's gaze
A light to Israel's camp displays.

Although the sun far westward hies
When day at silent evening dies,
The watching stars the truth express,
That light again our land will bless.

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Though scarce repressed be sorrow's tear,
We see that Hope the tomb is near;
Her lamp, the Saviour's Word, whose ray
Star-like, assures the dawn of day.

God's covenant in rainbow form,
Is bright amid the summer storm;
The sign and pledge, though seasons wane,
That each in turn will come again.

Not less will He His promise keep,
To wake the buried saints from sleep;
And animate with heavenly breath
The ransomed from the power of Death.

We are assured there has been heard
By buried ones, the awakening word;
That, spite the grave's decay, will stand
On earth, the saved, at God's command.

Christ, the first-fruits, the earnest gives,
Sure as the assurance that He lives,
That, when He comes, from death's repose
His saints shall rise as He arose.

Time speeds, and brings the promised hour
When Christ will manifest His power;
When Hope will greet the sleeper's side:
The sealèd stone be rolled aside.

With such a Faith, shall fears prevail
When Christians reach the shadowy vale?
With such a Hope, shall mourners weep,
And dirges sound for friends who sleep?

The mourners, though they weep, may sing
With joy, O death, where is thy sting?
And at the tomb their requiem be,
O grave, where is thy victory?

M. H. H.

THE REVELATION OF THE BIBLE.

THE strongest internal argument for the Divine origin of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament is, doubtless, that which arises from a comparison of the doctrine taught in them with that put forward by contemporary religious systems. If we find a superiority marked and wonderful, and not to be accounted for by anything in the condition of the people among whom it originated, of the Scriptural revelation above that presented by other teachers and other systems of religion the obvious inference is that, while the latter proceeded from man, unaided by any higher influence, the former came from writing or speaking under the inspiration of God.

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The Holy Scriptures contain a certain doctrine or teaching which every one may read and form his judgment of for himself. The later part of those Scriptures, the New Testament, was written some eighteen hundred years ago by parties who were almost exclusively members of the Jewish nation. The other portion, the Old Testament, was written at different previous times; some of it, as the books of Moses, at a very extreme antiquity indeed. This portion also was written, so far as its human origin is concerned, by members of the Jewish people. I propose very briefly to compare the religious system of these Scriptures, in some leading particulars, with others of their time. The particulars I would here refer to relate to the great subjects of God, His nature, and the worship due to Him.

The gross idolatry of the ancient world is an undisputed fact. It was not only exhibited in barbarous but also in civilised lands. Indeed, if we were to institute a comparison, we should perhaps find the idolatry of civilised countries to surpass in its grossness that of ruder countries. Civilised Greece, the teacher of culture to the world, had deities innumerable. Some of their gods dwelt in the clouds above the hills of their classic land. Every mountain that reared its summit to the skies, every stream that descended from the hills, every river that rolled its course to the ocean, every grove that shaded from the heat of the sun, every sea-cave washed by the currents of old ocean, had its deity or its deities. We know the character of the leading ones of these deities, who could not be numbered for multitude. Passions, which are the acknowledged bane of human society, and against which even heathen philosophy strove, agitated the breasts of the celestial and the infernal gods. Vices which degrade humanity, not merely to the level but far below the level of the beasts, were common among the Immortals. The amours and intrigues of the Grecian deities were such as are only to be met on earth among a society of the most abandoned morals.

Or, let us turn to Egypt, the land of wonder,

Qua tumidus rigat arva Nilus,

the land washed by its swollen river. Compared with its civilisation in point of antiquity, that of Greece was but a child. "You Grecians"—Plato makes the Egyptian priest say to the great Athenian philosopher Solon—"You Grecians are ever children; you have no knowledge of antiquity, nor antiquity of knowledge."* Renowned in the annals of every nation, the early school of astronomy, the mistress of mechanical science, a proficient in the art of government, what does she present to our view in regard of the nature of God and the worship due to Him? The utter degradation of Egypt in this respect is painfully seen in her worship. The wisdom and the science of Egypt bowed down, as to its gods, to the ox, the crocodile, and the serpent!

Such as it was in countries like Greece and Egypt, such it was generally throughout the world. Men bowed down to stocks and to stones. The cutting irony of Isaiah is not a whit too keen for the senseless idolatry of the world (Isa. xliv. 9-20). He pictures the carpenter selecting from among the trees of the forest one suitable for

* Bacon, Francis, "Advancement of Learning." B. 1.

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his purpose. Part of the tree he burns in the fire; of part of it he makes a god whom he worships and prays to. The Roman satirist, looking contemptuously upon the superstitions of the world, has held them up to ridicule in the very same way that the Jewish prophet has done. He pictures the skilled workman in wood examining a piece of timber, uncertain whether to make of it a bench to sit upon or a god to adore. He decides at length in favour of the latter.*

But if such was the practice of the world at large, there was *an exception*. There was only one in ancient times. The learning and the research of man cannot fix its finger upon a second during the centuries that elapse from the call of Abraham to the birth of Jesus Christ. There is a nation, few in numbers compared with others, occupying a strip of coast upon the Mediterranean, whose territory was the meeting-point of great nations, which was from its position in communication with all. The theology of this nation is a contrast to that of every other. The unity and supremacy of God is its leading doctrine.

How simply grand, compared with the systems of polytheism, is Moses' account of God and of man's relation to Him: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Deut. vi. 4, 5). Where amid the widespread system of heathenism can we find such a burst of praise as breaks forth from the Levites' lips on their day of solemn fasting at Jerusalem: "Blessed be Thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein; and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee" (Neh. ix. 5, 6). Where does any poet of antiquity put into the mouth of his god the description which Jehovah gives of Himself in Isaiah? "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them. Is there a God beside Me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any" (Chap. xliv. 6-8).

Let us take one or two practical examples of the superiority of the Biblical theology. The first shall be taken from the Old Testament, from the history of the prophet Jonah. A ship is sailing from Joppa to Tarshish. Its mariners are heathens, and beside them the vessel carries a single passenger, a Jewish prophet. A great wind blows, and a mighty tempest arises in the sea, and the ship is like to be broken. Terror seizes upon the mariners and forces them to prayer. They cried, we read, "*each one to his god*" (chap. i 5). They did not know, and could not know, which of their innumerable deities had sent the storm, and which of them, therefore, it was who should remove it, and so they send abroad their prayers in every direction in hope that some one of them may be directed aright, and are indignant when they find their passenger Jonah asleep and not praying, as though, if it were his God

* Horace, B. 1, Sat. 8.

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who had sent the storm, he was throwing a chance away of his and their common safety (i. 6). How different, how superior is the conduct of Jonah! How magnificent is his simple confession of faith as he stands among the distracted, bewildered professors of polytheism: "I am an Hebrew; and I fear Jehovah, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land!" (i. 9). Even on their dark mind flashed, for the moment at least, the conviction that here was truth. The power of the elements had prostrated their minds with terror, and in Jonah's confession of faith in One Great Supreme Creator, they saw the only Power that could rule the elements of nature.

Take another example. It shall not be from rough seamen, but from the inhabitants of polished Athens; yea, from the very *elite* of its philosophers and men of letters. The assembly of the Areopagus was no better off than the ignorant, hardy crew who rowed hard to bring their vessel to land when the storm fell upon them on their voyage to Tarshish.

Athens was in many respects the most remarkable city in the ancient world. Learned, polite, witty, critical, it was the resort of learned men from every part of the earth. The intelligence of the world was concentrated there. It was the Eye of that Greece which, in the pride of its philosophy and manners, called the rest of the world barbarian. A Jewish teacher, taught in the school of Jesus Christ, comes to Athens (Acts xvii. 15-34). He looks around him on the scene which it presented. He views it in its religious aspect. He sees it "wholly given to idolatry." In the language of Isaiah, it was "full of idols." "It was easier," an old satirist said, "to find a god than a man at Athens." But there was one altar and one inscription there which specially drew Paul's attention, as illustrative of the uncertainty and confusion of polytheism. It was an altar with this inscription, "To the unknown God."

The history of this altar and inscription is very curious. It would appear to have been this. Somewhere about 430 years before the birth of Christ a terrible pestilence, originating in Ethiopia, and passing through Egypt, fell with a fearful force upon the city of Athens. The Greek historian Thucydides has described with painful minuteness the whole process of this disease, from its first seizure of an individual to its fatal termination.* It was a disease unparalleled in its virulence and destructive power in the memory or the knowledge of that generation. The skill of the physician could not arrest its progress. It fell on the strongest as on the weakest alike, and after inflicting terrible torture, carried off its victims within a period of from seven to nine days.

Whether these were cared for or neglected, it mattered not. Whether they were attended by the physician or not, the issue was the same. The servants fled from the infected houses. In the city, at that time in a very crowded state, the dead lay on the dying and the dying on the dead, throughout the streets. They fell one over another as they walked along in the thoroughfares, and lay expiring round the public fountains, where they had crept to assuage their terrible thirst.

It was probably under these circumstances that the Athenians erected

* Thucydides. Peloponesian War. Book ii.

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the altar "To the Unknown God" which drew the attention of the Apostle Paul as he lingered at Athens. Either while the pestilence was raging, or, as several of the early fathers and modern writers suppose, after it was removed, they raised their altar. Unable amid their multitude of deities to say which had sent it, or which had removed it; unable even to determine whether any one of the deities whom they worshipped was concerned in it or not, or whether it might not come from some one whose name they had never heard of, they raise an altar of supplication or of thanksgiving, or of both, to the "Unknown God," whom they desired to propitiate or to praise. Who he was, what was his name, what were his power and his attributes, they knew not. Only they would seek by this indefinite inscription to make sure that they thus addressed the right Divinity. And so they did; but He was a very different God from anything they supposed. It was the one true God who had sent the pestilence, and removed it. It was to Him, though they knew it not, that the altar had been raised. How noble in its simplicity is the confession of faith which Athenian superstition suggested to Paul to make: "God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Here was the God unknown to polished Athens, but known, and made known, by one who drew his first knowledge of God from the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Let us now for a little while contrast the worship of God as we find it depicted in the Scriptures and in the annals of heathenism. When Israel left Egypt and came to Palestine, they found its inhabitants devoted to their own system of religious worship. They were earnest and sincere in it, no doubt, but that worship was indeed of a fearful nature. From various notices of it in Scripture, amply confirmed by independent testimony, we know that cruelty and obscenity were distinguishing features of it. It was of such a nature that Israel was even forbidden to inquire and pry into its nature. All imitation of it was sternly forbid by the Jewish lawgiver: "Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination to the Lord, which He hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods" (Deut. xii. 31).

Such was the nature of the worship among the peoples in whose country Israel took up their habitation. We know, however, that the general worship of other nations was of a similar kind. The most fearful crimes were connected with ancient idolatry. It could not be otherwise since the deities themselves set the example. Adultery, incest, unnatural crime, cruelty, bloodshed, and theft, were exemplified in the persons of their gods, and were consecrated as part of the worship to be paid to them. Venus patronised courtesans; her temples were scenes of impurity; her worship, under one name or another, was spread over the earth. Human sacrifices bled on the altar of some of the most polished nations of antiquity, as well as among rude and uncivilised peoples. It was so in Egypt, Canaan, Assyria, Phœnicia, Greece, Carthage, Rome, India, Mexico, Gaul, and Britain.

How different the worship required from Israel! The grand reason

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always given for their utter separation from the Canaanites was, lest they should be led to imitate their obscene and cruel worship (Deut. xii. 30). The cruelty which was so common among others was forbid to them. No human sacrifices were to stain the altar of Jehovah. No cutting or maiming of their persons was permitted to His priests, such as was judged agreeable to the cruel gods of heathenism (Deut. xiv. 1; 1 Kings xviii. 28). Purity was required in Jehovah's worship and from His priests.

We have a remarkable instance of this last feature of Jewish worship in 1 Samuel ii. The conduct of the sons of the high priest Eli is here brought plainly before us (ver. 22). It was most heinous and most disgraceful. But all its heinousness and disgrace arose from the contrast it presented to the conduct expected and required from those sacred characters who ministered to Jehovah in His tabernacle. The conduct of Eli's sons, if committed by the priests of heathenism, would have been little thought of. On some occasions it might have formed part of their worship. In Israel it was a heinous sin. It was felt to be such by the people. It was sternly denounced by God, who, for their sin, cut off Eli's sons from his household and the priesthood from his house (vers. 32-35).

Now we ask ourselves, whence has all this arisen? What was there in the children of Israel to account for their superiority in this respect over other people? Moses, their lawgiver, was no doubt learned in all the wisdom, religious as well as secular, of Egypt. But it most certainly was not from this source he drew his religious system, which was in every respect opposed to that of Egypt. The nation to whom he gave the law had lived for four hundred years in Egypt, and were deeply tainted with its idolatries. During the whole period of their history, from their deliverance from Egypt to their return from Babylon, they were far more strongly addicted to the idolatries of the nations around them than to the pure Theism which was taught in their Scriptures. Indeed, that whole history is chiefly the fierce struggle between Theism and Idolatry, in which only after long centuries of contention, the former came out triumphant. No schools of philosophy ever arose among them to give them the advantage of a superior culture. Only throughout their lengthened history, from the Exode to the return from Babylon, there rose up a line of men, the most extraordinary line of men in the religious history of mankind—the Prophets—who made their bold protest against idolatry and its abominations; who kept up the continuity of Theism and its pure attendant worship; who, occasionally favoured and honoured by the ruling civil power, but far more frequently persecuted by it, at length prevailed, and fixed Theism and purity of worship as the standard faith of Israel. What was the source of the inspiration of the Jewish prophets? It came not from man but from God.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE KING.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you very much for "The King" in this month's RAINBOW, and I thank God for the grace and wisdom and power bestowed upon you, and so well applied. What loftiness of nature, what sublimity of character, what wealth of inheritance, what infinity of power; and yet, what tenderness and love in Him who is "heir of all things," and with whom we are fellow-heirs. "For if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." I almost envy you the power and opportunity of setting forth the truth. Would that I could multiply the circulation of the RAINBOW a thousand fold! The article, "Internal Evidence," by Mr. Constable, is also very refreshing and strengthening. This August number must have come to your readers as the richness and wealth of harvest; yet but as an earnest or instalment of what is to come.

I am, dear sir,
Yours truly,
ROBT. PAYNE.

GOOD WISHES.

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in sending you 10s. for the RAINBOW Fund; 5s. from me and 5s. from Brother S. (Madras). I again thank you for the RAINBOW, and *believe* it will continue to gladden and comfort the hearts of many, till the MASTER appear, when they will require it no longer. And may you, sir, be spared many, many years, and continue its much beloved Editor. For I am sure that you are very much beloved by hundreds, and that in many lands. And as suggested by T. M. B., I hope a good photograph of yourself will appear in the January number. Very respectfully yours,

T. G.

DESPOILED THROUGH PHILOSOPHY.

DEAR SIR,—It may interest some of your readers to know that I am publishing as an eight-paged tract, under the above title, the paper on "False Teaching," which appeared in August RAINBOW. Price 8d. per dozen, or 4s. per 100, from address below.—Yours sincerely,

M. W. STRANG.

8, Lindsay Terrace,
Dowanhill, Glasgow.

RAINBOW TRACTS.

DEAR SIR,—I am so much delighted with your admirable paper on "The King," that I send £1 to help the expense of printing it as one of the RAINBOW Tracts.

I am, yours truly,
J. S. A.

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THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Of this Society will be held (D.V.) in the Temperance Hall, Chapel Street, Leeds Road, Bradford, Yorkshire.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, September 6, 7, 8, 1881.

Order of Public Gatherings—

On TUESDAY, September 6th, at 7.30 p.m.

The Annual Sermon will be delivered by the Rev. WILLIAM LEASK, D.D., of Maberly Congregational Church, London (Editor of "The Rainbow"), on "The Old Faith."

On WEDNESDAY, September 7th, at 7.30 p.m.

A Public Meeting will be held, chair to be taken by ROBERT J. HAMMOND, ESQ., of London (Treasurer of the Association), when addresses will be delivered as follows:—Mr. WILLIAM LAING, of Edinburgh, on "Conditional Immortality." Rev. GEORGE P. MACKAY, of Mint Lane Baptist Church, Lincoln, on "*Un*conditional Immortality." General H GOODWYN, of Reading (Author of "Anti-typical Parallels") on "A Challenge to Orthodoxy." Mr. GEORGE ALDRIDGE, of Bradford, on "The Silence of Scripture on Natural Immortality."

On THURSDAY, September 8th, at 3 and 7.30 p.m.

Two Public Meetings will be held, chair to be taken at each meeting by HENRY J. WARD, Esq., of Liverpool (President of the Association). At the afternoon meeting at 3, a Lecture will be delivered by Mr. ALBERT SMITH, of Blackburn (late curate of the parish church, Withnell, Lancashire), on "What is the soul? Is it Mortal or Immortal?" to be followed by a Paper, which will be read by General H. GOODWYN, on "The Gospel in Ezekiel." At the Evening Meeting, at 7.30, addresses will be delivered as follows: Rev. THOMAS VASEY, of the Baptist Mission, Bacup, on "The Church of Christ: Its Present Mission and Future Destiny." Rev. BURLINGTON B. WALE, of High Wycombe (Author of the "Closing Days of Christendom"), on "The Pre-Millennial Advent: Its Nature, Necessity, and Nearness." Rev. WILLIAM LEASK, D.D., on "Witnessing." ROBERT J. HAMMOND, Esq., on "Lessons of the Conference."

N. B.—Voluntary offerings in aid of the expenses of the Conference will be received at the doors. A BOOK-stall will be provided for the sale of Literature. Catalogues free. An earnest invitation is hereby given to the Public to attend the above meetings.

The order of Private Gatherings—

On Tuesday, September 6th, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., the Annual Meeting of the General Committee, the President in the chair. After the evening sermon a social gathering of members and friends. Refreshments will be provided free by the local committee.

On Wednesday, September 7th, at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., the Annual Meeting of Members, the President in the chair. The first hour of the Morning Session will be spent in prayer, to be conducted by the Rev. W. Leask, D.D.

On Thursday, September 8th, leaving at 9.30 a.m., and returning at 1 p.m. (in time for dinner), an Excursion to Saltaire, the model town founded by Sir Titus Salt. Rail Fare (Return tickets): First-class, 10d.; Third-class, 6d.

REFRESHMENTS.—Dinner will be provided each day at 1.30 at the Imperial Temperance Hotel, Manchester Road, at a charge of 1s. 9d. per head per day. Tea will be provided each day at 5.30 at the Temperance Hall, at a charge of 9d. per head per day.

LODGINGS.—Unless otherwise directed, a home will be provided by the Local Committee for all speakers and members of General Committee. Intending visitors are requested to communicate with the Local Secretary, Mr. Walter Clark, 6, Exeter Street (Bradford, Yorkshire), who will secure lodgings for them. If any homes are available (after providing for the above wants) they will be devoted to members.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Letters and Telegrams can be addressed to "The Conference, Temperance Hall, Bradford." The Hall is in Chapel Street, Leeds Road, just opposite the Eastbrook Wesleyan Chapel, and but a short walk from the railway stations. The Private Meetings will be held in the Saloon. Hymns: Special hymn-sheets will be provided.

CONFERENCE DONATIONS: With the pressing claims made upon the General Fund, the Committee urges its friends and helpers to specially subscribe sufficient to cover the whole expense of this year's Conference. Donations will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Robert J. Hammond, Treasurer, 62, Maida Vale, London, W.; and Cyrus E. Brooks, Secretary, Malvern Link, Wen.

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

OCTOBER, 1881.

THE DIVINE SIDE OF THE QUESTION.

"The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psa. xxxiii. 10, 11).

"The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Prov. xix. 21).

"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord" (Prov. xxi. 30).

"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. xlvi. 10).

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 9).

LET us suppose ourselves standing beside the grave of the rejected Jesus just after His burial. Let us further suppose that we had been His disciples, and had consequently believed all the splendid predictions of Heaven's prophets regarding the glory, the extent, the duration, and the blessings of His reign, but that we were ignorant of the foreordained resurrection of our murdered Master. What, in that case, would have been our thoughts? To say that we should have been bewildered, amazed, and oppressed with a sense of unutterable disappointment, would be saying very little. Things which are not worthy to be mentioned in the presence of this awful fact often have that effect upon us. It would not have been to us merely a personal calamity, the most terrible that could by possibility occur, blasting all our hopes, crushing them with a mysterious and remediless blow, and leaving nothing in the future but unrelieved sorrow and blank despair; but as it involved the destiny of Jew and Gentile, the veracity of the prophets, and the very character of the God of Israel for truth and faithfulness, we should have asked each other in sad whispers, with blanched cheek and trembling lips, What shall we say? what do, *now?* Have our prophets all deceived us? Is all the past a beautiful but cruelly deceptive dream? Is the entire history of our nation an elaborate preparation for nothing better than a disgraceful cross and a silent grave? Has Jehovah taken four thousand years in arranging for an issue which meets this fearful

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catastrophe just when it seemed upon the eve of realisation? Has He been disappointed, overmatched by Satan, obliged to give up the contest for the possession of the world He created, and to retire from the field, His resources exhausted, His wisdom insufficient, His foresight at fault, and His magnificent plans abandoned—a terrible, an eternal failure? Are the Devil and his angels henceforth masters of the position? Alas! and alas! woe unto us that we have lived to see this terribly fatal day! The Sun whose rays we were told were to enlighten the universe, has set for ever in blood! The Heir of David, the Seed of Abraham, the Son of Man, the Son of God, lies there, pierced through the feet, pierced through the hands, pierced through the heart, cold, *dead*, DEAD! Behold the place where they laid Him!

Let us endeavour vividly to realise all this, and we shall be able to estimate more highly the wonderful wisdom of God, when we ascend from the human to the Divine side of this mighty question.

We rise, then, from the evil counsel of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and the unjust sentence of the Roman procurator; from the clamours of the people, the scenes of Calvary, and the tomb of Joseph, up to the pure atmosphere of the highest heaven, and the council chamber of the Godhead. Let us put off our shoes from our feet; let us approach with uncovered head, for here all is holy. There is no excitement here, no surprise, no unforeseen circumstances requiring an alteration in the Divine *programme* respecting the affairs of earth. Nothing has occurred in our world to hinder the unfolding of God's majestic plans. Storm and tempest rush violently below, but here all is calm and peaceful. An incredible crime, the greatest in the annals of history, has been committed upon the earth: the Son of God, the Father's unspeakable gift for the benefit of mankind, has been contemptuously rejected, blasphemously insulted, and foully slain; but up on this lofty table-land of everlasting serenity there is no cry of wonder, no sign of disappointment, and no evidence that a sudden emergency has occurred demanding a sudden change of procedure. No dark cloud eclipses the ineffable glory, and casts a passing shadow on the golden splendours of the Sovereign's palace. Omniscience, in its undisturbed clearness, has seen from the beginning, ere ever the earth was, what would take place among, and by the agency of, men. All the ages, before the ages began, passed in review, and the Almighty Sovereign resolves to develop during their progress a purpose of vast, profound, infinite wisdom, which shall issue in boundless good to His creatures, the everlasting stability of His government, and the everlasting glory of His name.

He asks no advice of the first created sons of light, if they were created at the dateless epoch to which we now refer, but settles, "establishes in the very heaven," how, when, and where HE will act without interfering with the freedom of His responsible creature man, although He foresees that that freedom will be fear-

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fully abused in millions upon millions of cases. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding?" (Isa. xl. 13, 14).

How sublimely grand is this—God alone, amidst the unapproachable light, legislating for the entire future of a great world whose inhabitants would, for a lengthened period of its history, habitually do the things He should forbid, and so legislating that their very greatest crimes should, instead of defeating the purposes of His beneficence, be laid hold of by Him and made to minister to those purposes! Who would not adore such a Being as this? Speaking of Israel, Paul says, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all," and then adds, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" After this grateful doxology, this burst of fervent praise, he quotes the passage we have just cited from Isaiah, thus: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." These striking questions are in point in relation to the case before us. Who hath given God advice, or help, in dealing as He has done with a wayward and sinful race? Let them come forward, and He will largely repay them; He will be no man's debtor. He is so thoroughly satisfied with the unalterable decree that has gone out of His mouth; so sure that the work He has done and is doing will ultimately flood the world with light, and fill it with song, that He is ready with right royal liberality to reward any one who has given Him the smallest hint, or the smallest help.

O what an inexpressible relief it is to rise to the Divine side of this question after what we have seen of its human side! It is an escape from darkness to light, from pollution to purity, from a den of assassins to a circle of love, from a nest of demons to the steps of God's throne. What shall become of us, of my friends, my neighbours, my race? I cry in despair, as I look upon man turning into poison every good thing that God has given him, and at last filling up the measure of his iniquity by dyeing his hands in the blood of Jesus the Christ. I see paradise a failure, man driven out; the early world a failure, the race all but exterminated by a tremendous flood; Judaism a failure, the favoured people making the Word of God void by tradition, and turning His Temple into a den of thieves; the Heir coming to His own, rejected, despised, crucified between thieves; and Christianity leavened with corruption, and overborne through many ages with an apostasy of baptized paganism; I see all this, and my heart sickens, and my brain reels, whilst I cry out, Is there no help in man? But when

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I lift up my eyes to heaven, what a glorious change! what a divine relief! Here I behold the eternal procession of love and wisdom moving on majestically to its sure goal, as if nothing had occurred to check it for a single instant. It is a sublime and very wonderful sight. A voice comes from the Excellent Glory, in unruffled calmness, "My counsel shall stand, and *I will do all My pleasure.*" How reassuring! how full of consolation! And accordingly God moves on with stately step, through flood and fire and tempest and hurricane, through human failure, corruption, wickedness, and folly, and every step brings him nearer the Godlike issue in which he means His unchangeable purpose to terminate.

We say not that the foreseen rejection of the King was the *rule* of the Divine counsels; but we do say that *Divine purpose and Divine foreknowledge are associated in Scripture* in a manner which is sufficiently remarkable to arrest earnest attention. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). Scripture abounds with instances of a similarly suggestive character. The Serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's seed, but it was decreed that He should bruise the Serpent's head. The people were to reject Him, but the purpose of God was that His Servant should be "exalted and extolled and be very high." He is "despised and rejected of men," but it was determined that He should "prolong His days, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in His hand." To Him whom man despiseth and the nation abhorreth, it is promised that kings shall see and arise, and princes also shall worship. He was numbered with the transgressors, but the Lord says, "I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong." How men would use Him His Spirit describes beforehand thus: "For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet. I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." But what says God concerning Him? "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory." It was foreseen that the kings of the earth would set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, to destroy Him; but the counsel of Jehovah was, "I will make Him, My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." The people saw no beauty in Him why they should desire Him as their Ruler; but God determines that His throne shall remain whilst sun and moon endure. The traitor's kiss sold Him into the hands of His murderers, but God says to the kings of the earth,

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"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little."

And then what a far-reaching vision is opened up to us, when the idea of Jehovah's "*thoughts*" is suggested! "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psa. xxxiii. 11). Here they stretch across all the ages, and anticipate with the calmness of settled certainty the realisation of His will. "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered" (Psa. xl. 5). Here human inability to embrace the magnificent sum of God's thoughts is gladly confessed; and as they are so graciously, so mercifully "to us-ward," they are made the subject of grateful adoration. "O Lord, how great are Thy works! and Thy thoughts are very deep" (Psa. xcii. 5). Here their profundity goes down beneath the deepest depth of man's sins and sorrows, and lays the foundation for a perfect remedy, the actual efficiency of which no foreseen evil deeds of the race shall be able to prevent. "For the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity" (Psa. xciv. 11). Hence it is "a vain thing" for the kings of the earth and the people to imagine that they can defeat the purposes of Jehovah concerning His anointed Son (Psa. ii.). All the scorn and the derision, the shooting out of the lip, and the wagging of the head, were foreseen, but the Lord says with that wonderful calmness which is so characteristic of His utterances, "Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee" (Isa. lv. 4, 5). But *how* is this, and the offer of abundant pardon which accompanies it? Here is the grand answer: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 8, 9). It is thus that our God reveals Himself in wondrous contrast to the thoughts and ways of men. "For I know their works and their thoughts," He says, works and thoughts of evil; but what follows? "It shall come to pass that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see My glory" (Isa. lxvi. 18). How that thrills the heart! See His glory! His purpose is to stand then, after all the crimes and sins of men! Christ rejected, the Holy Spirit resisted, religion corrupted, the Word of God disregarded, and what follows? The extermination of the race, and God, with wearied and exhausted patience, abandoning His original plan as impossible of realisation in such a world? No, not that; but, "I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see

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My glory!" Most emphatically His thoughts *are* higher than ours! Here, indeed, are arrangements in view of the rejection of the King, worthy of Infinite Wisdom.

And so with regard also to the movements of the confederate nations against Zion in the latter day, *His over-ruling thoughts are again referred to as the secret of the success of His purposes.* "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel; for He shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor." And then, continuing the metaphor, He calls upon beleaguered Zion, "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth" (Mic. iv. 11-13). They come to destroy God's city, and He does not prevent their warlike journey, but when they think the prize within their grasp they suddenly fall to rise no more. How true is that word, "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord" (Pro. xxi. 30); for, however subtle and well-arranged their plans of procedure, with the view to subvert His authority, He has said, "I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible" (Isa. xiii. 11). All the widely-diffused action against the sovereignty of Jesus will come to nought; it is so decreed; and, "the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform it." Here is our argument, our battle cry, and our strength. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God" (Psa. lxii. 11). "God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent; hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19).

The great principle of unalterable determination on the part of Jehovah to do His will on earth, however men may imagine that they have done their will in opposition to His, is thus stated, in language remarkable for its calm strength: "The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand; that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon My mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall annul it? and His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" (Isa. xiv. 24-27). This principle is repeatedly mentioned in various connections, and its application to the subject before us is too obvious to require argument. "The Lord of Hosts hath purposed to stain the pride of all glory, and to

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bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth." This to Tyre, "the crowning city;" and, still keeping our eye upon the Divine side of things, we see the inspired prophet writing: "He stretched out His hand over the sea, He shook the kingdoms; the Lord hath given a commandment against the merchant city to destroy the strongholds thereof" (Isa. xxiii. 9-11). So with regard to the princes of Zoan, and "the wise counsellors of Pharaoh," it is asked, "Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of Hosts hath purposed upon Egypt" (Isa. xix. 12). No, they knew nothing about it. His purposes will be accomplished, wisely, perfectly, and to the very letter, whilst the infatuated actors in the world's drama are blindly supposing that they have it all their own way. "For I am God," He says, "and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth My counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isa. xlvi. 9-11).

There are also many most instructive passages in relation to God's foreknowledge of human conduct, and His purposes in connection therewith, two or three of which may be looked at. "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I *knew* that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee; . . . . for *I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously*, and wast called a transgressor from the womb" (Isa. xlviii. 3-8). "Thus saith the Lord, Thus have ye said, O house of Israel; for *I know the things that come into your mind*, every one of them" (Ezek. xi. 5). "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. viii. 29). "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Pet. i. 2).

Truly, "the Lord is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isa. xxviii. 29), and His doings towards the children of men will form the theme of admiring and adoring study in the ages to come, as they do now to all who love Him; with this difference, that "when that which is perfect has come," we shall see with clearer eye, and apprehend with a stronger grasp of understanding, whilst our admiration of the Great Worker will rise in proportion to the breadth of our view.

Even now and here, with all the weight of mortality upon us, and with the dimness of vision consequent upon our imperfect spiritual condition, we sometimes get glimpses of the Divine procedure in relation to our race, which compel us to wonder and

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worship. We see good brought out of evil, in a way that reveals the presence of Infinite skill and Infinite love; whilst the evil still retains its character, and is actually seen in its most abhorrent features in the very light of the good that is brought out of it! In the counsels of God, Jesus is a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but that fact, so far from palliating the crime of those who killed Him, intensifies it beyond utterance. The personal and official dignity, and the sacred character of the betrayed and murdered Lord, reveal the enormity of the crime; and every blessing that reaches man through the good that God resolved to bring out of this evil, pours increased light upon the everlasting contrast between good and evil. The murder of the man Christ Jesus was the foulest deed on which the sun ever shone. No; we correct ourselves; the sun did not shine upon *that* deed; but God's purpose to widen the sphere of His operations with regard to man, and to save the world through the death of His Son, must be kept at an immeasurable distance from the actors in that dismal tragedy. He is in no conceivable way accountable for what they did. The deed which darkened the heavens, and shook the earth, and rent the temple vail, and startled some of the dead into life, was all their own: and if God, in surpassing wisdom and mercy, chose to make the victim of human malice the sin-bearer for the world, the gracious arrangement is all His own. The two ideas must be kept distinct. God's sphere of action is above and beyond theirs, a high and holy region of whose existence they dreamt not. Co-workers with Him they were not in any sense. The very thought is blasphemy. They were "murderers," and the fact that they were so will remain a fact through all eternity, though I doubt not that some of them have been saved by the blood they spilt, and will obtain everlasting life through the death they inflicted. But this latter fact is the result of arrangements of which they knew nothing at the time, and of counsels in which neither they nor any other of God's creatures had part. If it pleased Jehovah to lay on the blessed Being whom wicked men crucified "the iniquity of us all," that Divine arrangement was the result of mutual counsel between the Father and the Son;—and the Jewish rulers had no more to do with it than they had with the creation of the heavens and the earth. The deed of man is one thing, the decree of God is another; in motive, essence, and object they are everlastingly distinct, and we must not for one moment blend them together, or we shall introduce confusion where order is above all things necessary.

We have said that it was one of the purposes of God to widen the sphere of His gracious operations in the world when Christ should be rejected by the Jews. One remarkable prophecy in Isaiah makes this very clear. You remember the occasion when our Lord, just before His death, gazed with tender compassion upon the city, and used these pathetic words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that

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killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. xxiii. 37-39). Now, turn to the prophecy in the forty-ninth of Isaiah, and you will find this very complaint of failure in the gathering of Israel anticipated by seven centuries. "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain; yet, surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God." Mark the answer of God to this mournful cry from the lips of the Messiah of foreseen rejection: "And now, saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and My God shall be My strength." Here was consolation. Jehovah would still look upon Him with ineffable love, although when He should appear the nation would utterly reject Him. This was much. To have the approval of Him that sent Him was a rich fund of joy; but still the weight was on His heart, and the complaint upon His lips, "*I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain.*" The Son desired to see some results of His labour, as well as to have His Father's approval. Well! it shall be so. Listen to the glorious oracle that immediately follows: "And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." What a flood of blessed light falls thus upon the distressing darkness! what a rush of joy into the heart of the Messiah! "Israel will abhor and reject Thee, My Servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth. I know they will, but Thy work shall be no failure. Thou shalt do for Me something greater far than the gathering of Israel. Thou shalt be the light of the Gentiles, and My salvation to the ends of the earth. I will make Thy rejection by Israel the occasion of light, Thy death the medium of life, to the world." Most wonderful, most beneficent purpose! God's complacency in His Son, God's compassion on a sinful world, come out here in a manner that captivates the imagination, and fills the lips with praise.

And then the prophecy proceeds to matters of detail: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him whom man despiseth, to Him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose Thee. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard Thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a

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covenant of the people to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that Thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth: to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them. And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim." And the very next prediction on the prophet's roll, as if to complete the picture of mercy's triumphs over the nation's guilt, and to set an ample joy before our blessed Lord, shows us that the time shall come when Israel shall be remembered and gathered to the standard of the Messiah.

I might here remind you also how God had arranged the affairs of the world, with the view of facilitating His own comprehensive purposes; how the sceptre had departed from Judah and a lawgiver from between his feet when the Shiloh came, so that when rejected by the Jews he died a Roman death; how Palestine was a vanquished province of that colossal empire which had made the world its own; how all nations were in expectation of some wondrous Being who was to revolutionise society from its foundations, and introduce a reign of heaven upon earth; how, consequently, the tragic story of the death, and the wondrous rumour of the resurrection, of Him who claimed to be the Son of God, was told everywhere, and made a profound impression throughout the Roman world; and how the very policy of the Jewish rulers, which led to the crucifixion of Jesus as a peace-offering to Rome, hastened the catastrophe they dreaded, in the destruction of the city and temple, and the scattering of the miserable remnant who survived the horrors of that unexampled siege; but I do not choose to enlarge on these things, instructive as they are.

Scripture itself is our sure guide in this investigation, and it shows most clearly that in Heaven's eternal purpose respecting the restoration of man and man's world, the rejection of the King by the people who were waiting for Him, and upon whom He had so many claims, was foreseen; and, in the wondrous grace of God, selected as the occasion of manifesting His character and exhibiting the resources of His infinite wisdom. "The King of the Jews," most certainly the rejected One was; and He will be acknowledged as such yet; but when He was "cut off" He chose to become the atoning priest for the world, and the incense of His all-perfect sacrifice still ascends to God as a sweet-smelling savour; and all who come to God by Him are assured of eternal life. Sin has abounded unto death in our world, even to the death of the sinless Jesus by wicked hands; but it was in the counsels of God that He should become a curse for us; and grace has consequently super-

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abounded; the curse has been turned into a blessing; and that which seemed so fatally against us has secured for us a glorious immortality. Thanks be to God for all this! EDITOR.

ON SUFFERING.

A Paper read to the Union Hall Mutual Improvement Association at Edinburgh.

A SAD perplexity it is to many to find so much suffering and sorrow in this world ruled over by One who is All-wise, All-powerful, and All-good. For in spite of all the improvements effected from time to time, admitting that much has been done to mitigate the severity of many of the more acute diseases to which the race is subject, and to ameliorate to some extent the condition of the poor, the fact remains that man's days are full of woe and trouble, and it is as true now as it was in the Apostolic age, that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain." "Oh," some exclaim, impressed with the thought of the world's misery, "if we had the power, we would at once banish sorrow from the earth, and make all things fair and good as at the beginning." There are others who affect to bear all the ills that flesh is heir to with a calm stoical indifference, cloaking their feelings; who to all outward appearance move on insensible to any of the thousand varieties of misery and suffering which their fellows endure. Endowed with a hard, flinty heart, they despise as weakness those manifestations of sorrow welling up from the great heart of humanity, and may sometimes be heard expressing the opinion that a man's intellect should be so highly cultivated that on its smooth surface, sorrow, despair, and woe, should make no impression. And, again, there are others who delight to parade their personal trials before the eyes and ears of those with whom they associate. Given a patient listener and freedom from interruption, with glib monologue there will be unbosomed sorrow after sorrow, the one crowding on the other, and each rendering the other insignificant. They enlarge upon the pain they endured night and day, the operation which had to be performed, and then the sickened hearer is asked if ever any one has experienced trials like these.

The opinions of these three representative classes are the result of superficial observation and superficial thinking. To the first the answer is: Suffering is very frequently the penalty of sin; you cannot remove the suffering without destroying the sin. To the second the answer is: There is an object to be gained by the right enduring of pain and sorrow which is not gained by ignoring its existence. What that object is will be seen as we proceed. To

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the third the answer is: Those who have endured most, talk least of their trials; and such that imagine that none have suffered what *they* have suffered, have not yet learned the lesson which their trials *should* have taught them.

But some may ask, why are we, God's children, compelled to go through the dark waters of affliction? "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." If He ordains suffering for us, it is that we may be taught to rest our confidence in Him alone, not to put our trust in man or in his proposals. Every trial gives us time to pause to examine and measure the strength of our faith in God; and, conversely, the intensity of the power which the world and the things of the world exert over us. Perhaps we have trusted to our own wisdom and knowledge, when something occurs to warn us that our boasted wisdom avails not. Instead of our affections being centred above, they may have been engaged with things beneath, and then God arouses us to the uncertainty of life and prosperity. We need such reminders; for how easy it is to trust God when everything is smiling on our path; when this earth seems to be the garden of the Lord, every tiny flower and waving blossom conveying to the thoughtful mind lessons of joyous gratitude. But in seasons of adversity it is *not* so easy to trust God; it is *not* so easy to believe that He doeth all things well; and we do not see the all things working for good to us who know Him. When sailing with the stream it requires no great exercise of faith on our part to be assured that God arranges all our movements. But when the heavens become black with clouds, when the rain falls in torrents, when the streams threaten to overwhelm us in the flood, when we sail *against* the stream, *that* is the time of test. He doeth all things well? What! When He bids us drain to the bitter dregs the sufferer's cup? When from our encircling arms He snatches away our nearest and dearest? Yes, afflicted one, lying there so low, smitten with a sorrow nigh unto death, even THEN. And of this I am certain, that when years have rolled on and we can cast a retrospective glance over our career, we shall be led to acknowledge that our darkest hour has taught us priceless lessons, that then was engraven and stamped on our mind some great truth of which previously we had been ignorant or unheeding. So in our troubles and difficulties we should not in peevish unfaith cry out, "Why am I afflicted thus?" Rather let us ask grace to bear our appointed burden imposed upon us by a loving Father, and thus our suffering will be profitable to us. Let us remember how extremely difficult it is to compare our circumstances with those of others; for what would sit lightly on us, might crush some more highly-tempered person, and *vice versa*. It is not possible then for us to affirm truly that *our* trials are greater and more frequent than our neighbours'; but though it be as we imagine, we should endeavour all the more earnestly to be learning those lessons of

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trust and humility, patience and resignation, which those troubles should teach us. Each and all need patience.

> "Bear patiently thy cross of grief and care;
> Leave to thy God to order and direct."

"Oh, rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee thy heart's desire." Some one says, "There is a road, and the name of it is Patience; the flowers that grow by it are few, but they are very sweet; and if you pluck them and weave them into a crown, the fragrance shall last for ever."

But Paul, in 2 Cor. iv., speaks about "our light affliction, which is but for a moment," working "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "What," exclaims one, "My *light* affliction! when it is prostrating me to the earth; oh, what a mockery to term it *light!*" And another cries out, "For a *moment!* when life-long has been my trouble and no end in view but death!" But observe that the apostle uses "light," and "but for a moment," for the purpose of comparison. Abstractly considered, they may neither be light nor momentary; but they *are* light when compared with the "eternal weight of glory" which is ours if we endure aright; and they *are* momentary in comparison with that eternity which we will enjoy if we faint not. If it be ours to obtain an entrance into that everlasting kingdom of life and holiness, how small, how trivial will all our trials appear! Are we then to continue hopeless and despondent because at some period of our pilgrimage our path was rough, our limbs wearied, and our heart sick? Nay! rather let us come unto Him who is able to keep us from falling, and implore Him to sanctify unto us all our trials. Do we dare to murmur because God is not always loading us with benefits, and have we the assurance to compare our position with that of those who were stoned, sawn asunder, slain, destitute, afflicted, tormented?

We often forget that if we had no suffering to endure, we would be deprived of much happiness. This seems paradoxical: let us see where the truth lies. Let us suppose the case of a person who is battling with a painful disease which in some of its stages leaves the patient free from agony. What inexpressible joy fills his heart when he has no pain! Only such as have been thus situated can know the unbounded thankfulness which permeates his being, and nerves him for another struggle when the halcyon period is over, and his old enemy again comes to the attack. And how much severe pain can we endure bravely and cheerfully if we are assured of some coveted reward to be bestowed upon us after we have conquered. Again, those who have suffered can sympathise with the suffering ones. The blessing of health, like all other blessings, is not fully valued by us until we have been deprived of it for a season. How much tenderness is developed by the delicate touching kindnesses manifested toward those who are in trouble—

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attentions we might never dream of showing if health were continually possessed; and thus the finer and more spiritual part of our nature is exercised by our being called upon to comfort and soothe those whom we love, and feelings are brought into play which otherwise would have remained dormant and unseen.

I would guard against the idea that all suffering is hurled like a thunderbolt from on high upon our head as a punishment for sins which we have committed. We may be entirely ignorant of the nature of those particular sins which have deserved such a fearful retribution, but it is argued we must have sinned else we would not have been afflicted. Such a representation of the character of God does not harmonise with what is revealed to us in Scripture. The Psalmist says: "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word." I regard these troubles as the rough places of the road which the Lord either will make plain, or He will strengthen us so that we shall pursue our journey with trustful hearts, clinging all the more closely to Him as we see the difficulties before us, and feeling assured that He will lead and guide us for He has trod our path. We are not asked to suffer as He suffered: we could not. He knew beforehand what His future was: we know not ours. With unwavering trust He bore His appointed burden, ever ready to help those who were groaning under sorrows as nothing compared to His—and this because He had regard to "the great recompense of reward" lying before Him. The reward before us will be ours if we copy His example and become partakers of His holiness. No chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto all them that are exercised thereby. Listen to these beautiful words: "If thou dost feel in thee and beneath thee and over thee the omnipresence of Him in whom thy semblance becomes being, thy agony rest, thy loneliness communion, then thou knowest to whom thou dost cry in the darkest night of life, 'Father, Thy will be done: as in heaven, so on earth; as on earth, so in me.' Then all within and around thee becomes clear: the morning twilight with its cold mists vanishes, and new warmth streams through trembling nature. Thou hast found a hand which thou wilt never leave, which will hold thee when the mountains tremble and the planets are extinguished. Wherever thou art, thou art with Him, and He with thee; He is the Ever-near; His is the world, with its flowers and its thorns; and His is man, with his joys and sorrows. 'Not the slightest thing can happen to thee but by the will of God.'"

Without doubt our duty is to be resigned under the mighty hand of God. From Him all our blessings come. He removes some from us; let us bless His name that He has bestowed so many. If His purpose be to gauge our loving trust and living faith by causing us to suffer disappointment and sorrow, let us

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remember that the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through suffering. May we be endeavouring to become more perfect also, so that every trial may make us more and more fit to share in the glories of the future; and with eyes and hearts fixed upon the time when sin and suffering and sorrow shall cease, we may use the exultant words of the apostle, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Kirkcaldy, N.B. J. MILL.

POLYGAMY AND THE OLD TESTAMENT.

AMONG the internal evidences for the Divine origin of the Old Testament Scriptures may be reckoned, we fully think, the aspect in which those Scriptures stand towards the question of Polygamy. The rise within our time of the great Mormon delusion which has sought to establish a system of marriage which Christianity has plainly forbidden, makes the subject of peculiar interest to us.

Monogamy was the original institution of God. When the Creator looked upon Adam's state at the first, and pronounced that he was yet without an "help meet for him," God's reply to His own thought was the creation of Eve. One wife for one man was in the judgment of God that which was required. There was here no occasion or place for any ordinance of monogamy or any prohibition of polygamy. Polygamy was out of Adam's power. Monogamy was pronounced by his Maker sufficient for him (Gen. ii. 24).

That such was the original institution of God may also be seen from the primitive practice of mankind. Moses very plainly relates the departure from previous habit in the case of Lamech (Gen. iv. 19). His having "two wives" is as plainly noted as a new thing as the tent life, the invention of musical instruments, and the workmanship in brass and iron, are noted as new things in the history of human life and progress (Gen. iv. 20–22). In such a wonderfully brief sketch as is given of mankind in the opening of the Book of Genesis, where six brief chapters are all that is devoted to the history of our race for a period of some fifteen hundred years, the sacred writer would not have noticed the taking to himself of two wives by Lamech unless that had been a departure from the hitherto practice of mankind. Lamech married two wives, and only two, and this was reckoned by all an extraordinary event, and by most, probably, condemned as wrong. Such was the commencement of a social system which led in Jewish history to Solomon and his seven hundred wives and three hundred con-

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cubines; which led to the Seraglio of Abdalrahman, Caliph of Bagdad, of six thousand three hundred wives, concubines, and eunuchs: which displayed to the astonished minds of the Spanish invaders of South America in the 16th century the court of the Inca of Peru, whose concubines were numbered not by hundreds, but by thousands.*

With the Gospel of Jesus Christ came back the old institution of monogamy in even more than its primitive force (Matt. xix. 4–9). As first instituted by God there was no direct prohibition of polygamy. There was the simple institution of a state of monogamy pronounced by God suitable and adequate for the welfare of the human race. That was enough for the time. Departure from this established rule of God was plainly wrong. But where practice had established a different state of things; when polygamy had long been in use in different nations of the world; when, in particular, polygamy had been practised without rebuke among God's chosen nation by men who stood high in God's favour and the estimation of the people, it was then no longer sufficient, if a change in this system were intended by Christ, to lay before men the simple and original institution of God. This must be accompanied by a comment which would put it out of the power of any one either to argue that the original institution of marriage was not incompatible with polygamy, or that, at least, Christianity permitted polygamy as Judaism had done.

Our Lord has done all this plainly and beyond any doubt. He took occasion to do so from a question put to Him by His subtle enemies (Matt. xix. 3). Polygamy was at this time all but extinct among the Jews, but divorce was extremely common, and rendered polygamy a matter undesirable by almost every one. About to prohibit divorce from the marriage tie in every case whatsoever save only one, our Lord knew that this prohibition of divorce would send men back upon that practice of polygamy which had to a very considerable extent been laid aside, and that accordingly when He had uttered His mind fully and plainly upon the matter of divorce, He must do so as plainly and as unequivocally upon the kindred subject of polygamy. He has accordingly done so in His reply to the Pharisee's question—"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

He first lays before them the original law of marriage, and from its nature pronounces divorce to be unlawful. When to this it is objected that Moses commanded a writing of divorcement to be given to the woman who was put away, our Lord explains that this was permitted by reason of the hardness of heart of the people, but that it was a departure from the original institution. And then He lays down His decision that in every case whatever, save one

* 1 Kings xi. 3. Gibbon's "Decline of Rome," chapter lii. Prescott's "Peru," p. 48.

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only, where a man put away his wife and married another, he was guilty of adultery. Now, if it was lawful to have two wives, i.e., if polygamy was permitted, the fact of one wife being divorced before a second was married could not possibly make it adultery to take the second. It could only be because polygamy was absolutely wrong that marriage after divorce was unlawful, because divorce was not judged by Christ to break the marital bond. If a man might take two or more wives under any circumstances, his having divorced the first, whether divorce was valid or invalid, could not possibly make it sin in him to take another. The whole force of our Lord's argument in Matt. xix. 9, arises from the strict prohibition under His dispensation of that polygamy which was tolerated, not approved of, under the Mosaic dispensation and that of previous times. While one wife is living, Christ pronounces it adultery to marry another. Such is the Christian law of marriage.

That such was the view taken from the earliest period of our Lord's utterances upon this question there can be no doubt. How those who were polygamists before their conversion to Christianity were to be treated, has come up from time to time before the judgment of the Church; but it was never, that we know of, made a serious matter of inquiry in the Churches of Christ whether polygamy was lawful or not. There have been individual cases, as that of the Elector of Saxony in the 16th century, where an effort has been made to vindicate the practice in those instances, but the extreme rarity of the cases in which such attempts were made does but establish the general view of Christian men that polygamy is condemned by the religion of Christ.

But between the first institution of marriage, as we find it in Genesis ii. 24, and the promulgation of this by Christ in its original meaning, there came a great, and long-continued, and widespread divergence of practise. Lamech, the sixth in descent from Cain, introduces the practice of polygamy, not going, however, beyond taking a second wife (Gen. iv. 19). There can be little doubt that the practice rapidly grew in the wicked generations before the flood. No doubt it was continued in the early generations after the deluge. We find it established in the court of Pharaoh, King of Egypt (Gen. xii. 15). We find Abraham conforming to it. Use, doubtless, made it appear to be good, though monogamy might still be reckoned the better way. But, at all events, it grew into use wherever it was judged advisable.

It is needless to say that in this interval all the books of the Old Testament were written. Moses begins a series of writings which end with Malachi. To the period from Abraham to Malachi I would particularly refer. The history of this period is the fullest, and specially refers to the Israelites, from whom every one of the sacred writers, with the possible exception of the writer of the book of Job, was taken. During this period polygamy was permitted, so far as having never been forbidden. During this period

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some of the most honoured names of Scripture practised it without rebuke. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was a polygamist. Jacob, who gave the name of Israel to the chosen people, was one also. So was David, the hero of the Jewish people, the root from whence their Christ was to spring. So was Solomon, the wisest of mankind, whose peaceful kingdom from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates was a type of the reign of their Messiah.

And it is also to be remembered that not only were the writers of the Holy Scriptures themselves Jews, and writing at a time when polygamy was permitted, but that also some of the writers of Scripture were polygamists themselves. It has been thought by some that Moses was a polygamist, but of that I see no proof in Scripture. But David and Solomon were polygamists, and wrote between them no inconsiderable proportion of Holy Scripture. To Solomon in particular we would refer. With his magnificent court, including a thousand wives and concubines, he has, especially in his book of Proverbs, passed in review every condition of human life. The relation of man to woman, the question of marriage, often occupied his thoughts and his pen.

We must also remember that this question of polygamy must in all countries engage notice. If it was practised and justified in some nations, it was disused and condemned in others. If by some it was supposed to have its advantages, by others it was judged to be attended by inconveniences which far outbalanced them. Tacitus, in his History of Germany, remarks of the Germans, that while all other barbarous people practised polygamy, they alone married only one wife. By the laws of Cecrops polygamy was forbid in the State of Athens, the most civilised community of those times. Rawlinson tells us that it was not only forbidden in Athens, but also in the ancient and civilised kingdom of Egypt. Sallust, living in the most dissolute age of the Roman Commonwealth, judges that polygamy had the evil effect of causing the marriage tie to be lightly thought of. David Hume, in one of his ingenious essays, has presented in one view the various arguments for and against polygamy which have from time to time presented themselves to the human mind.*

Is not then the attitude of the Old Testament towards the great question of polygamy so very extraordinary that it may without any strain be reckoned among the internal evidences of its Divine inspiration? A state perpetually discussed for or against among men—a state practised throughout the entire period during which the Old Testament Scriptures were written—practised, too, by many of those men whom those Scriptures held up to our veneration, and by some of whom those Scriptures were written—a state which must have been constantly brought before the attention of

* Tacitus, Germanice, chap. xviii. Potter, Grecian Antiquities, vol. i., p. 200. Rawlinson's Herodotus, B. 2, chap. 91, note. Sallust, Jugurthine War, chap. 80. Hume, Essays, vol. i. p. 198.

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all sacred writers—it is yet a fact that not one text, not one chance or designed expression, can be found in favour of polygamy from Genesis to Malachi! More than this, indeed, is true. It is true that wherever the subject of marriage is spoken of or alluded to, while polygamy is not formally condemned, yet marriage to a single wife is spoken of in terms which imply God's approval of it, and this by persons from whom we might expect the very opposite.

Let us take a case in point. In our time has risen up the abominable system of Mormonism, which has sought as one of its main objects to establish polygamy. In a very remarkable book lately written to expose it, "The Englishwoman in Utah," by Mrs. Stenhouse, we have brought before us the treatment of this question by the apostles and prophets of Mormonism. They are not contented with advancing the example of Abraham and others in the Old Testament. They adduce also every plea by which it may be shown to be not only lawful, but also far the preferable way, and, indeed, a duty incumbent upon all saints. How different the Old Testament! It narrates many examples of polygamy among its most lauded men. It never praises it. It sometimes implies the very opposite, and this where we should least of all expect it.

Let us take the case of Solomon. In Proverbs v. 15–19, he speaks of marriage. In reading it we should never suppose it to have been written by a polygamist. It breathes throughout the spirit of one who lived after Christ had propounded his law of marriage. "Rejoice with the wife of thy youth," is not the language of a man whose affections and thoughts were divided among many, but of one who only loved one woman, whom he loved in youth and continued to love in age. We could scarcely suppose these verses were written by the man who "loved many strange women," in whose gorgeous harem were brought together "seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines" (1 Kings xi. 1–3). Where among them was "the wife of youth?"

And so it came to pass that when Christ came on earth, and restored marriage to its original condition, and quoted the description in Genesis ii. 24, as descriptive of that which alone obtained His permission and sanction, not one text written during ages when polygamy reigned in full force, was, or could be counted in opposition to His teaching. Scripture was throughout the dispensations and the ages true to truth, because holy men of old spake throughout it as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

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NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

No. IV.

THE MEASURING OF THE TEMPLE.

IF our interpretation so far be correct we are now arrived at the commencement of the seventh century of our era, a period when Mohammedanism in the East and the Papacy in the West may be said to have entered together on their career of earthly success. The year 606 is commonly given by commentators as that in which the Papacy first became a real external temporal power, and the same may be said to be true also, approximatively, of Islamism.

This date I regard as the commencement of the long dark night of the middle ages. It was apparently to last for a time, times, and half a time, i.e., (I think) 1260 years. It corresponds with the long and dreadful famine in the time of Ahab, which, as we know, lasted forty and two months; and it surely typifies a terrible spiritual famine and gross intellectual darkness. The Church of God was now in a state of spiritual slavery, and had been led captive to Babylon.

To comfort the saints therefore during this long and terrible period, something very great and wonderful is now vouchsafed to the eye of faith.

Another "mighty angel comes down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." This seems to assure the suffering people of God that in spite of all their temporary afflictions, they were to have on their side one of the mightiest of the angels of God, and they were therefore sure of ultimate triumph. By the angel setting one foot on the sea and the other on the earth is indicated, I think, the consolatory fact that this Divine Messenger has complete authority over both the sea and the earth, i.e., over all the world of heathendom and over all the professing churches. For the especial instruction of St. John seven thunders utter their voices, and though he was commanded himself to seal up what they uttered, we may perhaps hope that in some way or other their utterance is not unknown altogether to eminent servants of God. The thunders very possibly bear witness to the fact that "strong is the Lord God that judgeth" (His enemies); and I think these voices are intended to be a comfort to the people of God under trials and persecutions. Moreover, in order to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of God's counsels, the angel now lifts up his hand to heaven, and, in the most solemn manner swears by the living God, that this long and trying period shall be brought to an end as soon as ever it is possible, and at the earliest moment consistent with the great purposes of God. This seems to me to foreshadow that the saints during this long period of 1260 years should be greatly in need of consolation, and accordingly the most solemn and comforting assurances are given and reiterated that the Mystery of God would be finished when once the seventh angel should have commenced to sound. The remarkable expression, "The Mystery of God," seems intended to convey to God's people the assurance that

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under all the sufferings and persecutions to which they were exposed lay, as it were concealed, the working out and perfecting of some mighty and wonderful works in which they were ultimately to share. Pain and suffering and evil are, indeed, mysteries to us; but inasmuch as they are mysteries of God they must of necessity be reconcilable with the character of God, i.e., with love.

"As He hath declared to His servants the prophets." Hence the prophets in every age were in their prophecies referring, properly speaking, to the time at which the mystery of God should be finished, i.e., though these prophecies might be partially and faintly fulfilled in this present age, their ultimate and real fulfilment was in the age to come.

By the command given to St. John to prophesy again before (or concerning) "many nations and peoples and tongues and kings," is meant, I think, that the Church had now overspread the greater part of the earth; or, at least, of the Roman world (for I think that the prophecy generally refers almost entirely to the Roman world), and by the fact of the book having caused bitterness to be felt by the Apostle after it had been eaten, is significant that the prophecy was full of "lamentation and mourning and woe," and that it related to chastisements and afflictions about to be poured forth on the then apostate Church.

"Rise, and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein; but the court which is without the temple leave it out and measure it not, for it has been given to the Gentiles, and the Holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." The mass of professing Christians during all these ages were to be nothing more than worshippers of the "*outer court.*" In all ages, more or less this is true, but during this time not only were these outer court worshippers more numerous, but they believed themselves, and made others believe, that they and they alone were the true Church. The Church of Christ, like Jerusalem, has been trodden under foot by these worshippers of the outer court. Now it is, of course, much better to be even a worshipper of the outer court than not to worship at all; but it seems the peculiar sin of these was that they dared to tread under foot the holy city. They said, no doubt, like the Jews of old, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we," and they cast out as evil every one who did not agree with them. Consequently they are not to be numbered among God's saints, at least not as a body, though we may fairly believe that many *individual* outer court worshippers became also inner court worshippers. The true Church was now no longer visible. "The woman had fled into the wilderness," and the saints are known only to God, unknown to men.

The external professing church was now really *Gentile;* it is not deserving of being reckoned as a true church at all. Moreover, we have the important announcement that this *Gentile* church was to cover up, hiding and concealing from view, the true Church. Coleridge remarks very truly, "The powers of the world are often christened, but never Christianised; they are but proselytes of the gate."

It would seem, therefore, that now the world and the Church were *apparently* the same: the world had nominally become Christian, but at what a cost! How fatally Christianity must have been compromised

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when she admitted to her bosom the very world she was told to cast away!

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." *Who* and *what* are these witnesses? I agree myself with those who consider them to represent the Old and New Testaments, i.e., the Bible. If the 1260 days represent years, as I think they do, it is impossible that the witnesses can represent human beings, and, moreover, from the mention of these two "sons of oil" in the book of Zechariah, they must, I think, represent something analogous to those of this last mentioned book. Like them these two witnesses "pour out the golden oil," i.e., they incessantly and constantly preach the word, and hold up the light of truth to all. Here, however, they are "clothed in sackcloth," i.e., notwithstanding their exalted position they are more or less looked down upon by those who hear them, and they preach, as it were, clothed in sackcloth. They are only, so to speak, "voices in the desert." They are, indeed, listened to—their enemies are apparently obliged to listen to them and hear what they have to tell—but the world hates them, and would fain get rid of them.

What witness has God in the world now compared to the Bible? Whence does the Church get any knowledge of the will of God but from the Bible? Take the Bible away, and we are left in the darkness of heathendom. Abel being dead yet speaks, says the apostle, and even so *all* the prophets and apostles may be said to be speaking to us through the medium of the Bible. True it is that this treasure is contained in earthen vessels, and as is apparent in the disparity and disagreement of various manuscripts, it has in it an unquestionable human element; but, taken as a whole, it is no way difficult for us to learn from it the will of God; and from one end of the Bible to the other the teaching is love to God and love to man. Nothing in this world is or can be *infallible*, and we know our Lord Himself told us that *some things* in the Law were given by Moses and not by God, and yet, for all that, "the Scriptures could not be broken." I think He plainly meant to tell us that the solemn undertones of the voice of God could always be heard and understood by those who honestly search the Scriptures.

The testimony of Cardinal Newman to the English Bible is so interesting that I feel sure I am not digressing in quoting here his remarks: "Who will not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives in the ear like music that can never be forgotten; like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem almost to be things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments, and all that there is about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible." With this glowing and eloquent eulogy of the Sacred Volume we all agree, and therefore, it is certain that something wonderful, and more than human, speaks to us out of it. The Bible has been

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truly spoken of as "a Book filled with God." From beginning to end it speaks of God, and of everything as having reference to Him. What is this but saying, in other words, that it is a witness for God in the fullest and sublimest sense? If the words of Dr. Newman are true that, "all that there is about us of pure and good speaks to us out of our Bible," is not this a proof that God, the only source of purity and goodness, is speaking to us through it?

It has been very truly said that the religion of Englishmen—and I may add of all English or German-speaking races—is not a religion of church or chapel, but a religion produced, so to speak, by the slow working into the system of the general precepts and principles of the Bible. In it we seem to hear the voice of God speaking to us directly, and dealing with us as a father does with his children; and do we not all feel how fully and how beautifully the Psalms reflect and put into words for our use all the varied and fluctuating feelings of our heart, our hopes and fears, our repentance and our thanksgivings?

"These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of this prophecy." By this is meant, I think, that the Scriptures refuse to yield up their spiritual secrets and meaning except to those who approach them in an honest and upright heart; and, by the expression, "they have power to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will," is to be understood that the Scriptures, if not thus approached, may become the source of spiritual darkness and misery. "If any man hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth;" i.e., if any man *wrest* or *pervert* the Scriptures of truth, or in any way tamper with them, he does so at the peril of his own spiritual destruction, or of great loss of spiritual life. The Bible, like all the rest of God's works, is more or less to us what we are to it. "With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful; and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward." Just as the Lord says in the last chapter of Revelation: "If any man add unto these words, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book"; so here also, if any man add to the words of these witnesses (the Scriptures), he will be visited with some of these *plagues*. *

"When they shall have finished their testimony," we are told, "the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss shall make war against them, and overcome them." By this I understand that men shall cease to believe in the Scriptures; they will be to the world as if dead; the spirit of infidelity, and perhaps of agnosticism, shall so pervade the professing Christian world, that the world shall cease to believe in them. By "their dead bodies lying in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt," I understand that all this takes place in the professing Christian world, or in that which, at all events, once *was* the Christian world. At this time their dead bodies shall not be put into graves; i.e., the world will still read them; it will not put them out of sight, but it will read them with the object of proving that

* I must not be understood as at all condemning true and honest criticism of either the text or the meaning of the Bible. The witnesses are only *hurt* when they are *wrested* to evil purposes. No righteous witness ever objects to honest cross-examination.

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they are all false and wrong, and will, more or less, hold them forth as objects of ridicule and contempt.

"They that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." The world, like the Jewish Church of old, says to the prophets: "Prophesy smooth things; tell us of deceits." The Bible opposes itself invariably and determinedly to man's selfishness, and to man's desire to get away, as it were, from God and the restraints of conscience; and in this sense it is that the Bible torments them that dwell on the earth. I believe myself that the Bible opposes also the far subtler, and even, I may say, far nobler form of selfishness which imagines that the world is, or can be, ennobled in any way except through Christianity; and hence it here also *torments* those who think that, by education and progress, the world will be made *morally* better. Nothing but the Spirit of God can touch the spirit of man, and only through loving submission to God can the world be made really better.

In confirmation of the view that the "two prophets" represent the Bible, I may add that the word *prophet*, according to the Old Testament or Jewish idea of its meaning, did not by any means necessarily mean one who *foretold the future*. The word "prophet" simply means the *forth-speaker*, the man who speaks forth and proclaims the message given to him by God; and surely this is done now only by the Bible. In all Protestant countries, at all events, the Bible is appealed to as the Word of God; as, in fact, the only Book which really makes known the will of God; and, as such, it fairly and justly may be called a prophet, and the two Covenants, or Testaments, the two prophets. Moreover, throughout the Apocalypse it is almost impossible to take any of the great images as *literal*. No one, for instance, ever believes that a beast *literally* was to rise out of the sea, or that three evil spirits, like frogs, came out of its mouth. The Book is a Book of symbols, and as such it should, I think, be interpreted.

It is worthy of remark that in the corresponding vision in Zechariah the prophet *twice* asks the angel what these two sons of oil represent, and does not get a direct answer.

"And after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, . . . and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." By this is perhaps intended that now, after the lapse of a certain time, typified by three days and a half, some great discovery or other testimony to the truth of the Scriptures is afforded, which forces numbers of those who disbelieve, to accept them as truth; and, possibly, even some great sign or direct interposition on the part of the Deity *compels* assent from the world, and for a time, at least, obedience and submission. Followed as this would seem to be by some great political and social earthquake, a real, though only temporary, effect seems to be produced. I say temporary, because on the seventh angel sounding, things are as bad as before, or, at all events, bad in another way. I fear that by the resurrection and ascension to heaven of the witnesses is meant that, after the terror and alarm caused by these wonders have ceased, the Scriptures, more or less, disappear from the world, and the world being

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then left to itself, rapidly becomes atheistic. In one sense, it is true, it would seem an important difference has taken place, viz., the world and the church are not *now* professedly one; and thus, one of the great and tangled skeins of the web is unravelled, and the problem of the world's deliverance made proportionately simple. The difficulty in dealing with the professing churches has always been the vast amount of good that is in them; for so long as there are only ten righteous in the city, the city must be allowed to continue its career. It is for the sake of the saints that are in the churches that they are permitted still to exist, but when the time comes that these all are compelled to "flee out of Babylon," the end of this economy will probably not be far off.

"The second woe is past." This second woe I regard as embracing the whole of the 1260 years of the temporal power of Ecclesiasticism; not of Popery merely, but of all external powers similar in their nature and origin to the great "mother of harlots." When this takes place, and the people of God have come out of Babylon, the time of the end would seem to approach with great rapidity. It appears probable that the nations will ultimately no longer recognise Christianity as true; they may, and probably will, *invent* something to take its place, for all experience shows that men *cannot* live without something corresponding to religion and to God. Pure atheism, being in itself a mere *negation*, has no power at all; or, at all events, it must, from its very nature, be transient. The danger of what is called atheism is, that it leads to something worse. Moreover, a man who professes to be an atheist is, at least, an open enemy; but it is when atheism takes a different form, and becomes transformed into some form of idolatry, that it becomes terrible. It would appear that now the nations are angry, fulfilling the words of the 2nd Psalm, "The nations furiously rage together, and the people imagine a vain thing. The kings of the earth stand up against the Lord and against His Anointed." When once things have reached this pass, God Himself intervenes; and, as much in love as in justice, "takes to Himself His great power," and puts down all opposition.

There being now, as it were, not even ten righteous within the city, it it destroyed, and probably great and signal manifestations of God's power subdue all adversaries; and then, as I think, the Son of Man commences His millennial reign. He then gives reward to His saints and prophets; and, whether visibly or invisibly, they rule over the earth. Hitherto our Lord has only been ruling in the midst among His enemies; i.e., though He suffer His people now to be "evil entreated through tyrants," yet He overrules all things to their good; but then, He will smite through kings in the day of His wrath. Yet even now, in the midst of lightnings and thunderings and voices, the Temple of God is opened in heaven, and there is seen in His Temple the Ark of His Testament; i.e., in the midst of wrath He remembers His everlasting covenant; and I see, or think I see, in these consolatory and comforting words, promises of hope, of mercy, and forgiveness beyond the grave. T. W.

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MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. VII.

SO we arrive at the same glorious point; and yet we prefer the view and form of the reasoning which requires *then*, in the last clause of verse 38, to be adopted in lieu of "for."

17. Moreover, in justification of the estimate we have formed of the statement, "then all live unto Him," rejecting it as a declaration of the popular idea that the patriarchs were as souls then in the separate state, occupied with the unceasing services of exalted piety, and choosing rather to regard it as a description of *how God, in His Omniscient vision of the future, pictures them to Himself*, we venture for a moment to solicit attention to the alarming announcements of another resurrection, called the resurrection of the "unjust." We are perfectly aware that the only thing required of our Lord in answering the Sadducees was to prove the doctrine of a resurrection, that it—resurrection—was a part of the Infinite plan and purpose, and therefore not an impossibility, as His adversaries seemed to have maintained; at any rate, to have looked upon as a tale altogether beyond credence. It mattered not in the controversy who should rise; enough it was to establish the fact that *somebody* would be revived; and because the sceptics had just made reference to Moses as a religious authority, for whom they expressed uncommon reverence, he, as was formerly stated, is brought forward in the character of a witness to support the "Master's" teaching; for a resurrection was known to be one of His prominent themes, else the Sadducees never would have propounded their inquiry. In this manner, let us add, the Christ of God was wont to announce His general doctrine: "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation"—judgment (John v. 28, 29). Well, then, the words, "all live unto Him," and on that account are guaranteed a resurrection, could never be used with any moral import as to those who died impenitent under the Gospel; even conceding, for argument's sake, that as souls they continue extant, and in full exercise of their faculties, somewhere in the universe hereafter. They at least are not, orthodoxy being witness, spending their time for God's glory in that dreadful locality to which they are said to be consigned; and yet are they not to be resurrected? In that case we run up into conspicuous view this inquiry, *Does the resurrection, or does a resurrection for either class, depend in any degree on the moral characteristics of those who have taken up their abode in the invisible regions?* Not in the smallest. It rests simply and exclusively on the self-moved eternal *purpose* and *will* of God Almighty. Now, had it suited our Lord's design on this occasion to affirm a general resurrection, might He not have said, Both classes are to Him, in His all-seeing vision, alive?—a vision of necessity to be realised in the case of both, when some point in the distant future shall be converted into

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the present; the one division of the race awakened to the inheritance of life, the other for judgment and its dismal results. Even the vision of the sainted ones *as alive* does not, in itself, suggest anything as to the physical properties of their being, or betoken its unending duration; for that assurance we must build, and we may build securely, on this, "Neither can they die any more," and on this, "It is raised a spiritual body;" and so by parity of reasoning, from a life-vision of the dead who had rejected the Gospel, which would be equal to a vision of them resurrected, we could determine nothing as to the continuation of their second existence, and would be obliged to seek elsewhere for the information that after all its "end is DESTRUCTION" (Phil. iii. 19).

We are well acquainted with the fact that life is never associated with those who, while here, despised the Gospel of mercy; since in every situation existence is with them a fleeting possession, and can have no spark of immortality in its composition. They are rather represented to us—an awful consideration!—as doomed beings of no value, ordained, in consequence of having rejected Him who imparts life eternal, to pass like the baseless fabric of a vision and leave not a wreck behind. Their existence, even when restored by a temporary resurrection, is of a piece with what they had previously, a poor, frail, soulish, corruptible life; themselves burnable, and appointed to be burned up, after the manner of tares in the harvest field. Indeed, they bear a striking resemblance to those apples that, by some inherent defect or external blight, drop from the branches in their earlier growth, and as fruit turn out a signal failure; in contrast with those who abide in Christ; cling firmly to the boughs of the Tree of Life; reach their full, fragrant maturity, and at last are tenderly stored up in the heavenly chambers. And yet a life they have, unutterably poor though it be; and they must appear, in what we call the far future, to Him who quickeneth the dead, as truly alive as those whose privilege it is to awake for a grander existence, incorruptible and resplendent, like that of their resurrected Lord Himself.

18. The misunderstanding of the passage which has been under discussion takes its origin in the common notion of the soul as capable of existence apart from the body, illustrated in the quotation from the *Notes* of Mr. Barnes, about the souls of the Patriarchs being alive in the invisible world, and as in their essential nature endowed with deathless properties. Enough has been advanced to disprove both suppositions; but a little may be added, which, if we are not sorely mistaken, will throw back a flood of light on all that has been presented, as well as forward on the heavenly existence which mercy has ordained for the regenerated. Without the matter to be exhibited now, our labour would be incomplete, wanting the bracing and crowning and ornamenting thoughts which, if we can assemble them with even an humble measure of success from the Sacred Volume, ought to excite gladness and thanksgiving in every believing heart. Nay, more, we feel that what remains to be adduced will not merely give an insight as to the baseless character of the popular doctrine about man, but as to the amazing ignorance likewise that prevails concerning the Divine purposes towards humanity, that ought to retire for ever all such expositions as the one we have dissected, and lay some erudite and

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canonised authorities in the dust, for the errors they have administered to the confiding multitudes, who accept their pages and sermons on trust, instead of honouring the Holy Spirit of God by appealing directly to the "law and to the testimony" for themselves.

19. It may startle some readers, and almost, if not really, offend others, when we proceed to announce it as our deliberate opinion, founded on a very protracted study of the Bible, that the soul-state of humanity, being *incipient and rudimental*, IS DESTINED TO VANISH AWAY. That, we are aware, will sound most presumptuous and unscriptural in many ears. But, by-and-bye, it may turn out to be true; and as we avoid dogmatism with guarded anxiety, let us, while we attempt to show warrant for the language, have a fair hearing; a reasonable and moderate request.

THE SOULICAL STATE OF HUMANITY TO TERMINATE.

20. Turn we now to the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, where a description is given of the body or constitution of the resurrected saints: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. As it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam" (*repeat* "was made") "a quickening"—that is, life-giving—"spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." . . . "And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (verses 44, 45, 46, 49, 50).

In regard to this passage, so rich and elevated, we crave attention to a few particulars:

1st. The statement as to the first man Adam. He "was made"—*more literally*, made into—"a living soul," a quotation, as the reader knows, from the 2nd chapter of Genesis, on which we promised, at an earlier stage, to offer some additional remarks. The full record is this, verse 7, "And the Lord God formed man"—the being man—"of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." A very little repetition at this point is again unavoidable: Man "became," he did not receive, a living, or life-imparting soul; and stranger still, he did not receive a life-giving *immortal* soul: neither the one nor the other, for when the Creator "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," the "man"—all his organism having been completed, though up to this moment *unquickened*—the "man became a living soul," that is, a soul alive, or a living creature.

2nd. Nor is anything special indicated by the designation soul, or "living soul;" for the word rendered soul (Hebrew, *nephesh*) is applied indiscriminately to *all* creatures on the earth's surface resembling him, the noblest work of God, in this respect, that they all live by breathing. Gen. ii. 19: "Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof;" and the word (*nephesh*) here rendered "creature" is the *same* original term rendered "soul" in the

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7th verse. So also chapter i. 21: "God created great *whales*, and *every living creature* (*nephesh*, soul) that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly." To mention no more, verse 24: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature" (*nephesh*, soul).

3rd. And now, lest any one should imagine there was something altogether peculiar in the breath inspired into the man, we must understand that what he obtained was just the same breath imparted to the other souls—the inferior creatures—which the Lord God produced. For instance, Gen. vi. 17: "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life;" exactly the same Hebrew words rendered "breath of life" in Gen. ii. 7. So also Gen. vii. 15,—"And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the *breath of life*"—the same Hebrew again. And to give but one example more, verse 22: "All in whose nostrils was the *breath of life* (the identical Hebrew phrase), of all that was in the dry land, died."

4th. There is a peculiarity in all these phrases—applied to man and the lower orders of being—for in the original, "breath of life" is in the plural form, and ought to have been rendered "breath of lives;" and why the singular was preferred by our translators, we tarry not now to explain. But, be the reason what it might, the fact is beyond dispute. Had the plural rendering been adopted in our version, as it ought to have been, this would have been strikingly manifested, that the breath man shared is exactly that common to him with all the other creatures whose life is sustained by inhaling the oxygenated vital atmosphere. It is the breath, not of his life only, but of all souls, whatever be their rank among earth's living inhabitants. No less than the highest authority—the Maker of them all—sanctions this usage, and imparts to us thereby information we ought not to disregard, elevated though our place may be in the scale of creation above the lowlier existences around us. Thus when, as we have already pointed out, you see a man, a soul, in the Bible sense of the word, meets your eye, which is infinitely different from the theological sense; and no wonder that extravagant and absolutely erroneous conclusions have originated in such a departure from the simple utterances of inspiration.

5th. Of course, there are a few other uses of the term *nephesh*, but never, in a single instance, does it express the distinctive ideas about "soul" which meet us everywhere in prose and verse. Though derived professedly from Scripture, the astounding fact is they are not within the boards of the Bible; the teaching there being palpably contrastive to what is now commonly received. The prominent subordinate uses are:

Sometimes, by metonomy, it designates the *life* either of man or any animal, because life in every such case is the life of a soul, every breathing creature being a soul. These are examples: "But flesh with the life (*nephesh*) thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life (*nephesh*) of man" (Gen. ix. 4, 5). "Shalt give life (*nephesh*) for life" (*nephesh*) (Exod. xxi. 23). "All that a man hath will he give for

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his life" (*nephesh*). "In whose hand is the soul (*nephesh*—margin, *life*) of every living thing" (Job ii. 4; xii. 10).

We may advantageously select one or two passages where, instead of "soul," it had been better if "life" had been employed, as it is in the above verses, except the last, and others that might have been adduced. Take this one:

Gen. xxxv. 18: "And it came to pass, as her (Rachel's) soul (*naphesha*) was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni," &c. Her soul was undoubtedly her life; and the parenthetic words, "for she died," manifest clearly that this was the sense in which the sacred writer employed the term. It was not she that was departing, as the phrase is now understood, but her soul—her life; that is, *she was expiring*. The woman was ceasing to breathe, and life, like an exhausted lamp, was going out. Hence we read, "she died," and was buried. Dust she was, and unto dust she—not a portion of her merely—returned. In a word, Rachel died, and was committed to the sepulchre.

Once more: 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22, 23: "And he (Elijah) stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray Thee let the child's soul (*nephesh*) come into him (*margin*, his inward parts) again! And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul (*nephesh*) of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, THY SON LIVETH!"

Had our translators rendered *nephesh* in verse 21, "life," instead of "soul," as they have done in many places, there would have been no danger of misunderstanding this text. That it should have been so rendered, or that we ought here to understand by "soul" life, is obvious from the whole circumstances of the narrative.

We learn from verse 17 that the child's sickness was so sore "that there was no breath left in him;" and by ceasing to breathe he would cease to live.

The mother understood him to be dying: "Art thou come unto me . . . to slay my son?" (verse 18).

After the child's recovery, the language of the prophet is most explicit. "Thy son liveth:" he was miraculously restored to life, consciousness and activity.

Let it also be remarked, the man of God prayed that the soul (there is nothing about *immortal* soul in the passage) of the child might come "into *him* again." He did not ask that he—the child—might return, say to his body again, but that the soul might return *to the child;* in a word, that the boy might be permitted to live anew. The personality was in *the child*—with the death-pallor on his countenance—lying there, not in his soul; which soul merely gave life to, or was the life of, the enfeebled youth. Life had departed, breathing had ceased, or he had ceased to live; and the prophet desired that life might return, or that, in the compassion of Heaven, the woman's son might *live again*. We are accustomed to use the same mode of speech ourselves, as when we say a man's strength has gone, or that it has returned; we speak of health departing and of health being restored, meaning thereby that

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the man has become weak or strong, that he has become diseased, or has had a return of health once more. So here, the child's "soul" or life went away, he ceased to live; it returned, or he began to live anew by breathing, as he had done before the fatal calamity assailed him.

6th. Very often the word rendered "soul" is employed, in conjunction with a pronoun, to express personality, of which we have such a precious example in the Messiah's testimony of His faith, so fully explained already: "Thou wilt not leave My soul"—that is, *Me*—"in hell"—the grave—; "neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psa. xvi. 10); in other words, I shall have an early resurrection: and we all know how perfectly that hope was realised in His experience. On the morning of the third day He was shown "the path of life," or immortality.

21. All that has just been written we deem necessary as a guide to the meaning of the prophetic verse from 1 Cor. xv., and to which we now turn our earnest thoughts. For the sake of distinctness we must transcribe it afresh: "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (verse 44). Now the word translated "natural" is the adjective of the Greek noun employed as an equivalent of the Hebrew word (*nephesh*) translated "soul;" and it—the adjective—might have been rendered *animal*, or *soulical*, being descriptive of man in his *present* mode of existence. He is now a mere animal, whose life, like that of all organised creatures, great and small, winged and wingless, is supported by breathing, or by "the breath of lives," as we have seen it expressed in the beginning of Genesis; and his present mode or form of being is soulical or animal, on that very account, and no other. But at the resurrection the saints are to be soulical, or SOULS NO MORE. They are done with the animal or soulish order of existence for ever; and by Divine appointment, and by the exercise of Divine power, ascend, in virtue of their union with Jesus, the Lord from heaven, to the other form, or new mode of existence, here described as the spiritual, or spiritual body. Then, the soul-state, in place of being permanent or immortal, is frail and transient; to be succeeded, however, by a finer and loftier mode of existence, "the new creation;" which, being incorruptible, is deathless. With that IMMORTALITY BEGINS—immortality, the gift, not of nature, but of Redeeming Love—in possessing which they become equal to the angels, and can die no more. Such is the Divine order in this wonderful succession; an order completely ignored by the fashionable Christianity of the time. Yet deny it who may, cast it into oblivion who may, there it stands on the page before us: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (animal, soulical, flesh-born); and afterwards that which is spiritual (spirit-born). As we have borne the image of the earthy (man, that is, Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (man, that is, the Lord from heaven)—verses 46, 49.

22. At this stage of the inquiry there is an error, against which we are constrained to sound a brief note of warning, with reference to the "spiritual body;" though being somewhat hazy, we may not have power to exhibit it in quite definite language. We allude to the notion, by no means rarely met with, that the spiritual body is, or probably may

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be, evolved at the time when what is called death by its advocates happens. This error, or a phase of it, appears in the following distich:

> "As mystics tell us that the fleshly form
> Enfolds a subtler that escapes the worm."

The "subtler" is, we conjecture, regarded by the "mystics" as the "spiritual body" of St. Paul; at any rate, that is the idea alluded to in the couplet, so far as we can approach its meaning.

The same notion, or something akin to it—more definitely, though cautiously expressed—is intimated in the following extract from a remarkable paper, "THE GREAT PROBLEM: CAN IT BE SOLVED?" by G. R. Gleig, Chaplain-General, that appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, January, 1875: "If the spiritual body which we anticipate be not evolved at once (that is, at the hour of death), then consciousness is suspended" (page 143); meaning, as the context authorises us to state, not suspended for ever, but till the hour arrives when the "spiritual body" is to be fabricated by Divine skill and power.

Both of the quotations, the poetry and the prose, present a conception holding, as its fundamental idea, the familiar notion of soul, and its adaptation for existence—conscious existence or not conscious—apart from a fleshly organism. The doctrine referred to in the couplet seems, when fully expressed, to be: At death, the soul quits the "fleshly form" for all time, and the subtler one, which had been enclosed by the fleshly, takes its place, as the home and delicate instrument of the mind, soul, or whatever other term may be preferred to designate the entity to which, as philosophy falsely so-called ordains, self-consciousness belongs. It may involve this idea also, That but for the "subtler form" consciousness would terminate till some new and finer organism or frame is, by Creative power, conjoined with the soul, as the fleshly form once was. The second extract supposes, like the first, that the soul is not affected by death beyond this, that for the want of some material adjunct or body it will be thrown into a state of insensibility. The "spiritual body," according to the writer in *Blackwood*, may be evolved at death; and in that event the soul is privileged to retain consciousness beyond the last earthly hour, and goes on in the exercise of its other distinguishing attributes.

Both opinions, we submit, diverge from the Testimony, (1) in their underlying conception of what the human soul is, and the scriptural doctrine on that point need not be reiterated here; (2) in the notion that death and the resurrection occur at the same time, or *may be* simultaneous. It has been our duty to show, at an earlier period, that the resurrection is always, in Scripture, placed apart from death, away down in the future; and, moreover, that it will not happen till the Lord descends in overwhelming grandeur, when the whole company of the slumbering saints are to be summoned at once from their long repose. To accept the doctrine alluded to in the poetical citation, and that hinted at as a possibility in the second, is substantially, we fear, to endorse the fatal error that the resurrection is past already; or so to misrepresent the revelation bearing on the future, and the triumph of the saints who have been prostrated in Sheol, over their last enemy, that its essential quality is evaporated and lost. There are difficulties, things which reason cannot

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master, in connection with the revival of the dead; but better Scripture with its difficulties than a theory which pays a sort of respectful obeisance to the Divine testimony, in passing with a burden of fancies and conjectures and none of its celestial lore.

(*To be concluded.*)

LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY.

LO, I am with you: in life's morning hours,
When early sunbeams fall on opening flowers,
When, in the brightness of the morning air,
The bounding heart disdains the thought of care.
Lo, I am with you: in the dazzling light
Some snares and pitfalls may escape your sight;
But I will guide the feet that else might stray,
And I will lead you safely on your way.

Lo, I am with you: when the fiercer heat
Of sultry noon on weary heads shall beat;
When bowers are parched, and wayside founts are dry,—
Beneath a burning sun and cloudless sky.
Lo, I am with you; and My sheltering hand
Shall be a shadow in that weary land,
Cooler than Elim's streams that softly lave
The shady banks where stately palm-trees wave.

Lo, I am with you: when life's storms arise,
When lightnings flash and flame from sable skies;
When pealing thunders rend the quivering air,
And the earth reels and trembles in despair.
Lo, I am with you: calmly ye shall stand;
Lightning and tempest wait on My command.
Ye shall not fear the storm or earthquake's shock;
Your feet are planted on the Living Rock.

Lo, I am with you: when, from day to day,
Lies stretched before you one unbroken way;
When trifling duties form your daily care,
And trifling tasks your highest interests share.
Lo, I am with you: trivial tasks shall be
Worthy of Gabriel's strength if done for Me;
And, duties trivial in your human sight,
Are lofty service if performed aright.

Lo, I am with you: when, in dread array,
The hosts of Satan bid you to the fray;
When ye have scarcely courage to oppose
The furious onslaught of your deadly foes:
When ye have scarcely strength to grasp and wield
The Spirit's sword, or Faith's all-sheltering shield,
Lo, I am with you in the mortal strife,
My voice gives courage, and My words are life.

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Lo, I am with you: when earth's friendships fail,
When earthly comforts prove of no avail;
When death's cold shadow falls upon your way,
Quenching the light and gladness of your day.
Lo, I am with you: by the gloomy grave,
My love can comfort and My power can save.
Lo, I am with you: I will safely keep
Your best-beloved ones who in Jesus sleep.

Lo, I am with you: even when ye stand,
With trembling feet, on Jordan's chilly strand,
I, too, have passed those waters cold and dread:
For I am He that liveth and was dead.
Those gloomy waves their victims shall restore:
Behold, I am alive for evermore!
In hope of life eternal yield your breath,
For I am with you even unto death.

Lo, I am with you alway: and My smile
Shall crown your pleasures and your griefs beguile;
Shall make your earthly sunshine still more bright,
And flood your sorrow with celestial light.
Lo, I am with you: on your onward way
A fire by night, a guiding cloud by day:
Your Shield, your Helper, your unfailing Friend,
Lo, I am with you even to the end.

Lo, I am with you alway: Lord and King!
Our grateful hearts Thy faithful love would sing:
For how could we without Thee tread the way
That leads through darkness to eternal day?
Lo, I am with you: those blest words impart
Strength to the mind and comfort to the heart.
Dear Saviour, condescend with us to be,
Till, at Thy coming, we shall be with Thee. A. W.

THE WAY BACK FROM THE GRAVE.

HOW many of us have gone to the grave and left a loved one there! Few, at least, have not visited the place where a loved one's ashes lie and dropped a tear, as we recalled the happy, joyous times we have spent in the society of him, or her, whose face we can look on no longer.

"Friend after friend departs:
Who has not lost a friend?"

A father, on whose strong and loving arm our most ardent confidence was stayed; or mother—name ever dear to our hearts—whose tender caresses still linger upon us. The husband, our stay, our comfort and our pride; or wife, dearest and closest heart's companion of our life, in

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all its joys and sorrows. Or children, dear to our hearts by their early and constant claims on our care, love, and service, and entwined in our affections in a way known only to those who have had, and lost them. The son, who was his widowed mother's only treasure left to her: all these lie buried in the grave; and along with them, oh, how much of the joy of our lives!

Hear the cry of one father after his first-born and only child: "She bore it all so quietly and patiently; our hearts sore looking on, and able to do so little for her; our prayers going out for her, that her young life might be spared, but all in vain! She dies; and with her went a great deal of the light and sunshine out of our hearts and home. With her many little ways she had entwined herself round our hearts before she fell ill. Almost every day she seemed to grow more intelligent; and learned to do little things. My step quickened at dinner and tea hours to get her in my arms: and she knew my step so well. Though her age was only counted by months, she brightened our home, and kept us cheerful. Surely the young life is not quenched for ever! Surely Death shall not for ever hold the young ones in his ruthless grasp!"

Such is the cry, not from one only, but from thousands of hearts, yearning after those who have gone to the grave. Wondering, hoping, inquiring: Shall they ever return? Is there a way back from the grave?

And here the thought comes up to us, that we ourselves must one day be buried in the grave. The thought is not a pleasant one; and, while ready at all times to acknowledge its truth, we are fain to believe that, to us, the grave is yet a good way off. Still, the truth, that our breath is in our nostrils, ever ready to depart, keeps staring us in the face. "It is appointed unto men once to die." However far off our love of life may lead us to fancy the day of our death, that day shall assuredly come; when the last services of friends shall be performed for us, and they shall bury us out of their sight.

Just as this sad truth imprints itself on our minds, and according to the vividness of the light in which we see it, so is the eagerness with which we exclaim: "If a man die shall he live again?" IS THERE A WAY BACK FROM THE GRAVE?

Our experience and observation answer: None that we know of.

"All nature dies, and lives again."

Spring and summer regularly succeed autumn and winter; but we have seen no summer to our dead. The icy hand of the grave is still unthawed. Must it ever be so?

Sometimes we take heart from *the analogies* of *nature*. "The chrysalis that lay motionless and dry, wakes up to a higher life; and, gloriously arrayed, rises into the air, nestles in the bosom of the rose, and sips the nectar of the choicest flowers;" and so men sometimes fancy that they shall likewise return from the prison-house of hades to the joyousness of renewed and higher life. But, alas! the pleasing fancy disappears when brought into the light of truth and reason.

The chrysalis was not really dead; the creature was only in process of development, from the condition of a crawling worm to that of a gay and painted butterfly—a worm with wings; which, having reached the maturity of its being, shall shortly die and be no more.

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The acorn, too, bursts its husky covering; becomes a sapling, and, in time, a sturdy oak, which may live a thousand years. But when the oak dies and crumbles into rottenness, *it* never lives again.

And must our dead ones, and we ourselves, so go the way whence we shall not return? We, too, had our beginning in a tiny germ, which became a living form—a child, a boy, a man; and is our destiny to be, when dead, to live no more, like a decayed old oak? We would not like it so; we shudder at the thought of being blotted out for ever from conscious, sentient existence.

> "For who would lose,
> Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
> These thoughts that wander through eternity?"

And so we raise our eyes to God, our Maker, and anxiously inquire of Him, *Is there a way back from the grave?*

The cry is heard. Hark! A voice comes, clear and thrilling, from the Son of God Himself; "Fear not! I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen, and have the keys of hades and of death." There, there is the way back from the grave; and there is no other!

Having thus led our thoughts up to the Fountain of Life, even life from the dead, let us drink thereof, and gain that life which never ends. Let us recount and meditate a while, on the words of Jesus and His Apostles, regarding the hope of resurrection from the dead.

First, turn to that touching scene at Bethany, when Jesus brought from the grave Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, after he had been buried four days: "Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him;" and said unto Him, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died; but I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto Him: I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus saith unto her: I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die" (John xi. 20-26).

In these words the Lord Jesus claims to be the cause, or source of Resurrection; that in Him was vested the power to effect resurrection and life to the dead. He had done so previously to this; and very strong and explicit were the terms He used: "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." "Verily I say unto you: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (John v. 21, 25).

These words were verified, when, moved with compassion at the sight of a widow weeping for the loss of her only son, as she followed him to the grave, Jesus touched the bier, and the mournful procession stood still; and in obedience to the call: "Young man, I say unto thee arise: he that was dead sat up and began to speak; and was restored to his mother" (Luke vii. 12-15). So also in the case of Jairus' little daughter. Jesus took her by the hand, saying: "Maid, arise; and her spirit came again, and she arose straightway" (Luke viii. 54, 55). And again, when at the grave of Lazarus, Jesus "cried with a loud voice:

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Lazarus, come forth: and he that was dead came forth (John xi. 43, 44). Manifestly, the dead did hear the voice of the Son of God, and lived again. It was to these and such like events the Lord referred when He said: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." These, however, were but the earnest of the results of His mighty life-restoring power. "Marvel not this," said He, "for the hour is coming in the which ALL that are in the graves shall hear His voice; and shall come forth. They that have done good unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation" (John v. 28, 29).

The same prerogative is claimed for the Son of God, by the Apostle Paul, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22).

The redemption brought in by the Second Adam—the Lord from heaven—fully covers the ruin wrought by the first Adam. The *first* brought death to all; the *second* brings *life* to all men, by a resurrection from death—the consequence of Adam's sin. Even to the lost, Jesus is the way back from the dead. He died and rose and revived that "He might be LORD both of the dead and the living." And "all that are in the grave shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation," to die the second death—not for the transgression of another, but for their own sin.

THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE, however, is that which the Scriptures bring most into prominence. And no wonder. It is of it that Jesus spoke when He said to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life, He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Only to those who believe in Him, can the resurrection be a matter of hope and joy. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." "They that are counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from amongst the dead, cannot die any more," and "are equal unto the angels." "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught away together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Well they might; and well may we, if we are Christ's. Why should we sorrow, like those who have no hope, for the loved ones who have fallen asleep? As surely as Jesus died and rose again, so shall they. And if we be found in Christ at His coming, we shall see them all again; and, along with them, be ever with the Lord.

"A few short years of evil past
We reach the happy shore,
Where death-divided friends at last
Shall meet to part no more."

And so it is that, though we grieve for the dear ones lying in the

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grave, we sorrow, not in despair, but in hope. And so it is that, in full consciousness of passing away, the believer in Jesus departs in peace—

> "Leaves this world without a tear,
> Save for the friends he holds so dear."

The old disciple, full of days; the brother and sister, in the prime of life; the tender youth, like a blighted newly blown flower—peacefully and hopefully, breath out their life, concerned only for the grief of those they are leaving.

Death comes alike to all: it may very soon come to you, dear reader, and to me. Union with Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, by a living faith, is the only way back from the grave to incorruptibility and joy. Shall we see Him, and not be ashamed? W. LAING.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE UNJUST.

CONCERNING those who sleep in Jesus we know that they shall rise again, because they have at the hour of death the incorruptible seed sown in them. They shall arise immortal souls; because He lives, they shall live also: there shall be a spiritual body, they shall bear the image of the heavenly: and as the personal identity of the spiritual and glorified body of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be manifest to all as it was in His natural body, so shall the personal identity of every risen saint in His incorruptible body be manifest.

"Personal identity intimates personal recognition. Friend shall meet friend, not as a featureless phantom, but in the personal portraiture of identity."

But how are the unjust dead raised up, and with what manner of body do they come to judgment?

The soul (*nephesh*) is the concrete breathing personality: the mere carcass is expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures by the word *nevailah*: *nephesh maith* (dead soul) implies a dead person; *nevailah* is the dead body.

"The body was in the Hebrew denominated *gaiv* with respect to its substance, and in this sense (which is applicable to the spiritual as well as to the natural body), the apostle Paul speaks of waiting 'for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body' (Rom. viii. 23)—the σῶμα ψυψικὸν (1 Cor. xv. 44) a personal body, the *gaiv* and not *nevailah*.

"Now, the translators of the Hebrew New Testament have appropriately adopted the former term, *gaiv*, for 'body' in this passage. *Gaiv* is synonomous with σῶμα, generally used in speaking of the substantial body (vide 1 Cor. xv.)."

Now when a soul dies alienated from the life of God, with what body may it rise to judgment? for the *nevailah* or corruptible carcass is dissolved, and having no promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus cannot rise with the spiritual body of the eternal state; necessarily at its resurrection it can claim neither the old natural body nor the incorruptible spiritual body.

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And yet we must believe the sacred Scriptures—John v. 29; Acts xxiv. 15; Rev. xx. 12-15.

Let us consider more closely the Hebrew words used in reference to the body.

The *gaiv* is the body with respect to its substance, and may be used synonymously with σῶμα which may be psychic or pneumatic, or possibly of some other character; the *nevailah* is the deciduous corruptible body which is dissolved.

Now, in the burial of an alienated man the carcass or *nevailah* is entombed, and with it the "natural body"—the natural personal identity—is sown in corruption. This *nevailah* will never again be raised; nor will this personal identity ever arise with a spiritual body: and yet this personal identity, this soul, the substantial SELF, that has been entombed, must appear before the Throne of Eternal Justice.

This mystery may be solved by inferring that the unjust will be raised up every one clothed in a personal body, the GAIV, a substantial body. He gives a body as it pleaseth Him (1 Cor. xv. 38).

Not the *nevailah*, for it is deciduous and corruptible; not the pneumatic or spiritual, for it pertains only to the redeemed: in one sense it will be a psychic body; i.e., a substance of personal identity.

The Psalmist says: "In Thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." And to quote again my father's words: "It is quite within the grasp of human reason to conceive that the Almighty and Omniscient can re-create, after the pattern of the actual type of the past, as originally to create from the ideal of His own conception. The osteologist reconstructs from a simple bone the form and generic character of the extinct fauna of geologic periods. How much rather shall He, who originates all and knows and can do all things, and in whose universal and everlasting mind the individual thoughts and actions of past generations are registered, reproduce every body in his or her personal identity?"

Christians are exhorted to commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator. The verb κτιζω is applied by Homer to the founding or building of a city. The apostle intimates that a faithful God will, in the future, re-create the souls of men, every one in his, or her, substantial personal identity.

The raised dead ones, severally in a body (*gaiv*) of substance, stand naked before the Great White Throne: their names are unrecorded in the Book of Life. Guilty!

Silently the life is again withdrawn, the soul is again subjected to the remorseless power of death, and the *nevailah*, the deciduous carcase, is committed to the lake of fire. "Twice dead;" a final and hopeless state.

Thus, I have attempted to answer the question, "With what manner of body will the unjustified dead arise?" The more express intention, however, of this paper is to ascertain what opinions, with regard to the subject, are held by Biblical psychologists.

Darlington. EDWARD WOOD FORSTER.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FOUNDATION OF PURGATORY.

DEAR SIR,—I send you extract of a letter to an active agent connected with the McCall Mission in Paris.

"I have heard of the great and wonderful work of the Lord in France, and especially in Paris, and have lately received and read with interest the publication of Mr. Bacon relative to the introduction of the deputation of the French Protestants to the American Churches. Of all the antagonists to the progress of the religion of Christ in the world, none can be compared with Popery, that "Mystery of Iniquity." From age to age its power has been exerted to deceive and enslave, while Jesus came to enlighten with the light of life, and to let the oppressed go free. There is an element, however, in the boasted Protestantism of our age which has tended to uphold the power of Popery, and which, in fact, is the fulcrum of the lever of that power. The belief that at death man goes at once to the blessedness of heaven or the miseries of hell without any reference to resurrection and judgment is that upon which the dogma of the Romish Purgatory is founded. Yet, strange is the fact, that the Bible which Protestants hold to be the infallible rule of faith, teaches no such doctrine, but that rewards and punishments are to follow resurrection and judgment. Protestantism, by upholding the contrary, has, in reality, been a strong buttress to the ruinous errors of the Romish Hierarchy. While the friends of the Saviour rejoice that the grand foundation truth of the Word of God, "*Christ and Him crucified*," is being proclaimed steadfastly by the Missions with which you are connected, I earnestly hope and pray that the manifest error, to which I have alluded above, may be seen and corrected. Yours faithfully,

J. L.

PROTESTANT INCONSISTENCY.

SIR,—A Roman Catholic priest, who read the proceedings of a Protestant church which had expelled an intelligent and devoted pastor for teaching truths he believed to be clearly taught in the Bible, but which were not in the creed or confession of the denomination, published a letter in the newspapers which might well make all the upholders of Protestant authoritative creeds blush with shame. The right of private judgment is a fixed axiom of all true Protestants, and the Bible is acknowledged by them to be the supreme standard of faith and morals. The Roman Catholics, on the contrary, deny both of these vital principles, and claim implicit obedience to the judgment and teaching of the church or priesthood. The writer of the letter remarked: "Had the expelled pastor been a Roman Catholic I should be at no loss to understand the reasons for his expulsion, but as he is a genuine Protestant I confess I am altogether at a loss how to account for the proceedings which have been

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taken against him. Like a true Protestant he has read his Bible for himself; surely no one blames him for that. Like a true Protestant he forms his own opinion concerning certain passages thereof different from others, and holds to his convictions as one responsible to God; surely no Protestant will blame him for that. And yet he is expelled! What then becomes of the assumed right of private judgment? If it be argued that he is free to exercise his private judgment, provided he agrees with the 'standards' of the denomination (which are but the opinions of uninspired men, often formulated in a dark age), I ask in what does his right differ from mine who also am free to use my private judgment provided I agree with the standards of the Church of Rome—the principle is exactly the same. The ground for the expulsion of the Protestant pastor by his prosecutors is the same which led the Roman Catholic Church to condemn Luther, Cranmer, and Knox, whose memories these same prosecutors hold in veneration! The pastor reads his Bible for himself; so did they. He interprets it for himself; so did they. His interpretation differs from the received interpretation of the times; so did theirs. He was judged and condemned by the 'standards' of the church; so were they. Luther set himself against the authority of the church, and he was a hero; the pastor set himself against the authority of the denominational creed, and he is a heretic!" J. G.

RESPECTING RESURRECTION.

DEAR SIR,—A judge has power to order the detention of a criminal by his own authority. As representing the Sovereign and law, he requires the concurrence of a jury (representing the people) before he can punish. Will it not be so at the resurrection, when our God, in Christ, will be vindicated in the destruction of transgressors by the concurrence of the redeemed Church, acting for the race; man, capable of immortality, not being put out of existence without a judicial inquiry? This, however, may apply only to the *oikoumenos*. It may be that the races of mankind have come upon the scene in succession, ending with the Adamic or Aryan race, the first to have the capacity for immortality. Pre-adamite men are certainly not to be taken into account in the question of resurrection; nor are countless numbers of the Adamic race who have been judged already. Do the multitudes that perished in the flood, in the fires of Sodom, in the Red Sea, in the overthrow of Babylon, and in many other places, come up *again* for judgment? Had they not all Divine warning before the sentence was executed? Their day of judgment is surely past.

I should like to see this subject ventilated in the RAINBOW.

Yours truly in the hope,

R. J. HAMMOND.

REJOICING IN THE TRUTH.

DEAR SIR,—I have just been thinking about you and reading your Paper, "The King Rejected," in this month's RAINBOW, and feel *greatly obliged to you* for it. Also I thank very much the writers in the Magazine. Thousands and thousands to-day are rejoicing in the truth and walking in the light, who, but for the RAINBOW, would have been floundering in the dark. *What a mercy this!* D. T.

Liverpool.

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LITERATURE.

Sketches, Literary and Theological. Being Selections from an unpublished MS. of the late George Gilfillan, Dundee. Edited by Frank Henderson, M.P. Edinburgh: David Douglas.

THESE sketches recall vividly the literary style and fine flashes of thought of our old friend—keen, analytic, forcible. No doubt it is in consequence of our intimate acquaintance with his writings that we fail to find much that is new to us in this handsome volume, but we are sure that to young men of literary taste the perusal of the book would be at once pleasant and profitable.

John Hazlehurst; or Original Sin. By MISS HUDDLESTON. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS book consists almost entirely of small talk. There is no word painting, and no elaborate description of scenery or character; but in conversation each speaker reveals his or her peculiarity with perfect fidelity. The obvious teaching of the volume is the duty and privilege of faithfulness to truth in its own beautiful spirit of charity. We fear we have sometimes failed to interpret the Yorkshire dialect, but we have been charmed with touches of loving faith, as a sustaining power in seasons of deep sorrow. But what John Hazlehurst's idea of "Original Sin" is, the fair author has forgotten to tell us. It is probably of not much consequence.

The Coming of our Lord; an Incentive to Holiness. By ELLEN LANKESTER. London: Elliot Stock.

A TRACT in the words of Scripture must ever be helpful to the reader, and on this subject peculiarly so.

The Divine Ideal of the Church in the Words of the Holy Scriptures. A Manual for Members of the Church. By AN ELDER. London: Elliot Stock.

THE compiler of this little book deserves thanks, qualified by the fact that he does not discriminate between Israel and the Church, which the Bible certainly does.

Promises, Prophecies, and Declarations relating to God's Chosen People Israel. London: F. Norgate, Covent Garden.

THIS also is a book of quotations from Scripture, but Israel is the subject, not the Church; and the national prosperity and power promised are remarkably great, as every student of prophecy knows.

Sermons Preached in London. By W. A. GRIFFITHS, Narberth. London: Elliot Stock.

EXCEPTING those theological errors which Mr. Griffiths has not yet seen, notwithstanding the keenness of his eye, these sermons are characterised by earnestness and vivacity; and, like some other Welsh preachers, he has the poetical art of seizing upon happy illustrations.

"*The Resurrection and the Life.*" By MARIA GELLETLY. Edinburgh: The Author, 5, St. Patrick Square. Price 6d.

A PIECE of sound criticism and severe logic from the pen of a lady, the perusal of which has given us much pleasure. Miss Gelletly sees the truth, and knows how to defend it.

Thirza; or, the Attractive Power of the Cross. By ELIZABETH MARIA LLOYD. London: Elliot Stock.

AN exquisite little story about a

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Jewish family. It is told with a pathos which moves the heart.

On Consumption of the Lungs, and other Chest Diseases. By GEORGE THOMAS CONGREVE. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS shilling book contains matter in which, alas! too many are interested. Our fairest and best, our loving and loved, are so often the victims of the fatal blight to which this skilful physician has devoted much thoughtful study, that we feel it a sacred duty to call attention to his wise counsels. We often receive pamphlets on medical matters which are quietly put to rest in the waste basket, but that is not the place for Dr. Congreve's able essay. It shall certainly have our good word, whatever that may be worth.

The End of the Dispensation and Coming of the Son of Man. By THOMAS FITZGERALD. Glasgow: J. M. Macaulay, 62, West Nile Street.

IT is impossible to say much on these great subjects in a twopenny pamphlet, but Mr. Fitzgerald has made the most of it, and has touched thoughtfully on several details.

Glimmerings of Glory: A Word for the "Sons of God." By R. EYLES. London: Potter, Kingsland Road.

THIS penny book contains precious and refreshing truth, and we hope the devout writer will find, ere long, that it has proved a word of light and comfort to many.

The Vicar of Jesmond (Canon Berkeley Addison) *and Eternal Punishment.* By JAMES HARRISON. Elliot Stock.

MR. HARRISON protests strongly against the awful doctrine of everlasting misery as "a manifest and absurd fallacy." Nevertheless he holds as "an undoubted fact that man's existence is continuous after his death, in weal or in woe, in sorrow or in joy." *This* "an undoubted fact!" It is not only doubted, but absolutely denied, by daily increasing numbers. If men live in death, the language of Scripture on this subject is unintelligible, and the glorious doctrine of resurrection is without meaning. The simple secret of the mournful corruption of theology is the corruption of *words*. Give them a non-natural meaning, say, for example, that death means life, and you may sink to any depth of delusion, even to the bottom of the papal purgatory. We should not have to fight for divine truth to-day if men had kept to the meaning of words.

The Bible Defended and Atheism Rebuked. Reply to Robert G. Ingersoll's Lectures. By ALLAN B. MAGRUDER. New York: E. J. Hale & Son, 17, Murray Street.

To us atheism seems an impossibility, except in the case of insanity or demonianism. Mr. Ingersoll is permitted, through the patience of God, to go from place to place hurling his shafts against the Holy Scriptures. When Mr. Magruder accepted his oft-repeated challenge to some Christian to discuss with him, the brave "Colonel" thought it prudent to keep out of the way. Mr. Magruder, therefore, has gone through the Lectures of this champion of atheism and has demolished them. His book is very valuable. He combines intellectual strength and lawyer-like logic with Christian charity, in an admirable manner. It is just to Mr. Ingersoll, and an important argument in support of our labours, to say, that he is

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one of many that the *supposed* Christian doctrine of eternal torments has driven into infidelity. Help, help, brethren, to show that this is *not* a Christian doctrine!

Man: His Primeval State, Naturally, Legally, and Morally Considered; also His Present Condition and Eternal Destiny. An Essay in three parts. By JOHN LAWRENCE. London: Elliot Stock.

VERY good indeed. Mr. Lawrence has come to the conclusion that Scripture means what it says, and the result is an interesting little book, in which there is much of that sadly *un*common thing—"common sense."

The Promise of Life, and the Doctrine of Everlasting Punishment. By J. F. B. TINLING, B.A. London: Elliot Stock.

SEVEN Lectures by an able man on subjects of great importance. On one or two points we differ from the writer, but that does not prevent us from welcoming his book as a contribution to the wiser and better theology of the last few years.

The Revised and Arianized Version of the English "New Testament." A Protest and a Testimony. By WILLIAM MORRIS, M.D. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row, E.C. Price sixpence.

THIS is a pamphlet of remarkable ability. The author is moved by a holy jealousy for the honour of the MASTER, for which we greatly honour him; and hence his "protest and testimony." That the pamphlet will excite attention and sell rapidly is certain, for it appeals, in language of condensed vigour, to the very heart of our faith, and will certainly evoke criticism, and perhaps replies from some of the Company of Revisers. Indeed, reply is essential; for if these weighty charges remain unrefuted, the credit of the New Version will be seriously damaged. Any suspicion of the Deity of our Lord is simply fearful, and must be removed at once.

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY ASSOCIATION.

THE Fourth Annual Conference of the above was held in the Temperance Hall, Chapel Street, Bradford, Yorkshire, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, Sept. 6, 7, and 8.

On Tuesday the Committee met at 11 and 3 for business, the President in the chair. In the evening the annual sermon was delivered by the Rev. W. Leask, D.D., Vice-President, from Jude 3: "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once (for all) delivered unto the saints." The sermon, which was both earnest and eloquent, was a defence of that faith "once for all" delivered to the saints; an exhortation to pure life and faithful witness; and a protest against—that worst of all corruptions of the faith—the perpetuity of sin and suffering. Above three hundred persons were present.

On Wednesday, proceedings opened at 10 with prayer, conducted by the Rev. W. Leask, D.D. At 11 the business of the Annual Meeting of Members commenced, the President in the chair. The Treasurer

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reported an increase of £30 in the year's income, and a debit balance of £3. The Auditor followed with a very encouraging analysis of income and expenditure. The Secretary's Report showed a decrease of twenty-seven in the membership, owing to the triennial revision of the Register. Fifty-nine new members had been added, two new Branch Associations formed, three additional churches had made collections. Lectures had been delivered in Uxbridge, Lincoln, Blackburn, Huddersfield, Gainsborough, and Torquay. Twelve publications had been printed, either as reprints or new, in all 32,000 copies. The *Bible Standard* has circulated to the extent of 35,250 copies, an increase of 60 per cent; and two new wholesale agencies had been established for the sale of Literature, viz., in New Zealand and South Australia. It was then decided to confirm the following recommendations of the Committee: That members' subscriptions be 2s. 6d. upwards; That the grade of associates be merged in that of members; That the representative members of the Executive be in the proportion of one to each fifty members; That paid offices be standing, not elective. It was also decided to establish new Rules for Branch Associations, and to publish a summary of rules for members and inquiries. Thanks were voted to the President and Treasurer for their generous donations. Also to the Bradford Church for its earnest and cordial co-operation, and generous hospitality. The following officers were thanked and re-elected: The President, Henry J. Ward, Esq., Liverpool; the Vice-Presidents, Rev. W. Leask, D.D., London, and Gen. H. Goodwyn, Reading; the Treasurer, Robert J. Hammond, Esq., London; the Secretary, Mr. Cyrus E. Brooks, Malvern; the Auditor and sub-Auditor, Mr. William Mortimer, Lincoln, and Mr. J. W. Davis, London. The following, with the above, form the Executive Committee: Mr. G. Aldridge, Bradford; Mr. W. Bausor, Lincoln; Mr. W. F. Davies, Liverpool; Mr. W. H. Miller, Liverpool; Mr. W. Laing, Edinburgh; Rev. Thos. Vasey, Bacup.

In the afternoon, at 3.45, a Members' Conference was held, in which the following took part: Messrs. T. Vasey, Bacup; Albert Smith, Blackburn; J. Wilson, Halifax; H. J. Ward, Liverpool; R. J. Hammond, London; W. Laing, Edinburgh; J. Paul, Bradford; Dr. E. W. Forster, Darlington; W. H. Miller, Liverpool; and H. K. White, Lincoln.

In the evening a public meeting was held, the Treasurer, R. J. Hammond, Esq., in the chair. Addresses were given by Mr. W. Laing, of Edinburgh, on "Conditional Immortality;" Gen. H. Goodwyn, of Reading, on "A Challenge to Orthodoxy;" Rev. G. P. Mackay, of Lincoln, on "*Un*conditional Immortality;" and Mr. G. Aldridge, of Bradford, on "The Silence of Scripture on Natural Immortality." The earnestness and clearness with which these addresses were delivered held an audience of near 500 persons nearly unbroken for considerably over two hours.

On Thursday, agreeable relaxation was provided by a morning excursion to Saltaire. At 3 and 7.30, public meetings were held, the President, Henry J. Ward, Esq., in the chair, when the following gentlemen took part: Mr. Albert Smith, of Blackburn, on "What is the Soul? Is it Mortal or Immortal?" Gen. H. Goodwyn, of

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Reading, on "The Gospel in Ezekiel;" Rev. Thos. Vasey, of Bacup, on "The Church of Christ: Its Present Mission and Future Destiny;" Rev. B. B. Wale, of High Wycombe, on "The Pre-Millennial Advent: Its Nature, Necessity, and Nearness;" Rev. W. Leask, D.D., of London, on "Witnessing." This last was the crowning meeting of the Conference; and the audience, of quite 500 persons, had repeatedly to find vent for its deeply-stirred feelings in applause.

Thus closed the fourth and best Conference yet held; its members departing thankful for the past and hopeful for the future.

CYRUS E. BROOKS, Secretary.

NOTICES.

"J. D." (Kulpara). Thanks. We are glad that our teaching has cheered you in life's journey, and thankful to the Master that you are only one of hundreds that have borne similar testimony. This is our reward. It is a priceless editorial salary, although it is not convertible into gold.

"G. L. D." Our contention is simply for the purity of Divine truth. It has come through fearfully corrupt channels; and our work is to rescue it from the pollution, as far as our limited means will allow. We are quite sure that any help rendered to this cause *must* be a Christian service.

"*The Ministry of Evil.*" Readers of the Editor's tract thus named, will have the goodness to correct two errors of the press which he did not see until a large edition was printed: p. 7, second line from bottom, draw the pen through "not." On p. 8, line 14 from top, read seemeth for seemed.

"A. B. C." The Jews are making efforts for establishing a colony in the district of Gilead and Moab, and have secured a grant from the Sultan of 1,500,000 acres of land for the purpose, for which they are to pay a large amount of money.

"J. C. Mc C." writes: Many thanks for your *excellent* editorials in the two last issues on the all-important subject of THE KINGDOM; the various bearings of which are so indispensable to the knowledge of the revealed will of God: that, without their recognition, it is simply impossible to comprehend His purposes so clearly revealed therein.

"T. T." Mahomet, or Mahommed, was born in Mecca, in Arabia, in or about A.D. 569. He began his pretended mission A.D. 609, in the fortieth year of his age. "Hegira" means *the flight*, i.e., of Mahomet from Mecca, from which the magistrates, fearing his impostures might foment sedition, expelled him, July 16, A.D. 622, under the reign of the emperor Heraclius. When the Turkish empire, the seat and stronghold of Islam, is dissolved—and the process of dissolution is very rapid, as all the world knows—"the times of the Gentiles" will close, with the exception of the brief reign of Antichrist, and then the House of Israel will be found in the land of promise. There are great events at hand!

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

NOVEMBER, 1881.

REWARDS OF FIDELITY.*

SALVATION being by grace and contrary to personal desert, it would be very evil to speak of eternal life, immortality, and celestial glory as being Divine rewards. But the Scriptures *do* teach the doctrine of Divine rewards to be conferred on account of sufferings endured in the path of spiritual service, and of fidelity to the name and truth of the Lord.

1. Speaking generally, an apostle says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And the same apostle, when about to lose his life on account of Christ, and his service to Christ, said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day."

Another apostle, when exhorting to ministerial fidelity, gentleness, and self-abnegation, as the servants, and not the lords, of the flock of Christ, says, "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." And the Lord Himself has said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

2. Paul exhorted the believers in Corinth to pursue a course of practical fidelity to Christ, and illustrated his exhortation by an allusion to the Isthmian games with which they were familiar. His exhortation was addressed to saved persons, to whom he said, "So run that you may obtain." He compared himself to the marshal or herald who proclaimed the order and rules to be observed by the athlete who contended for the crowns to be awarded; and showed that he himself conformed to the rules of the spiritual

* See "The First Adam and the Last Adam." W. H. Guest, Paternoster Row.

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course to which he exhorted others, saying, "So run I, therefore, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest possibly, having proclaimed to others (the rules to be observed) I myself should be unapproved." The Greek term *adokimos*, which in the English is translated "a castaway," means simply to be unable to stand the test or to be unapproved, as an aspirant for a crown; and does not relate to the subject of salvation.

The aphorism, "No cross, no crown," when correctly understood, represents a true doctrine, the doctrine of Divine reward; but if used in respect to salvation, it would be heathenish and evil. The exhortation, "So run that you may obtain," should be calmly considered; for, in this spiritual course, the motive and aim must not be to win a crown, but to serve and honour the Lord.

3. Treating of the superstructure of Christian doctrine, the Apostle Paul says, "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let each take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no one lay besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one build on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw; the work of each shall be made manifest; for the day will show it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire will test the work of each, of what sort it is. If any man's work remain which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire."

Herein, the theme is ministerial work and responsibility, and the manifestation of results in the day of the Lord. The contrast instituted is of great moment.

(*a*) In mentioning gold, silver, precious stones, the apostle alludes to their emblematic meanings in the construction of the Tabernacle, and in the breastplate of the high priest. In accordance with those emblematic meanings the gold signifies the manifestive and appreciable excellencies or moral glory of God; the silver signifies redemption; and the precious stones, the saints of God, as represented by the Son of God, their Great High Priest.

Therefore, to build gold, means to unfold and teach the truth concerning the moral glory of God, as manifested in the scheme of His manifold wisdom, and of the riches of His grace, for bringing many sons to glory, who shall be conformed to the likeness of his Son in eternal life. To build silver, is faithfully to teach the truth concerning the redemption which the Son of God accomplished on the cross—redemption unto God, even eternal redemption. And to build precious stones, is to teach God's estimate of His saints, as associated and even identified with His Son, as borne upon His heart in the presence of the Father, and as reflecting the light and glory of the eternal throne.

(*b*) But the wood, hay, stubble, represent doctrines which are

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alien to the truth of God, and are according to the teachings and traditions of men. The wood does, perhaps, represent the idea of utilitarian teaching on the evil principle of expediency; the hay, or grass, that teaching which has for its object the religious culture of the flesh, or mere psychical man; and the stubble would seem to denote that kind of wordy and worthless talk which is not unknown at the present time—"vain babblings."

(*c*) It is assumed that all the builders contemplated acknowledge the one foundation, and are themselves believers in Him. And it is taught that the work of each will be judged in that day, and that each will be caused to know the moral judgment of the Lord on the work which he has done, whether good or bad; and each will thus learn whether his ministerial work was approved or disapproved. Those whose teaching has been according to the emblematic meaning of the wood, hay, and stubble—while they themselves are saved—shall consciously suffer loss. And those who have faithfully taught the truth of God, as symbolised by the gold, silver, and precious stones, shall receive a reward.

4. The same Divine principles will be applied in that day to the works of all the saved. This the same apostle has taught saying, "Wherefore, whether present or absent, we aim earnestly at being well-pleasing to Him, for we must all appear before the tribunal (*beema*) of Christ, so that each may receive the things (done) through the body, according to that which was practised (as a part of their religious profession), whether good or bad."

The saints *themselves* "shall not come into judgment," neither shall their *sins* be brought to remembrance; but their *works* will be judged of the Lord, those works in the practice of which they have professedly served Him. And each shall be caused to know and entertain the moral judgment of Christ, respecting the works done, either really in accordance with His revealed will, or from a false zeal, and erroneous thoughts and intents. And in the case of each there shall be either a consciousness of loss, or a conscious possession of the approbation of the Lord and a distinguishing mark of His complacency in the service rendered to Him in honour of His name, and in fidelity to the truth of His Word. The practically faithful shall receive an everlasting reward.

It would appear that this judgment of the works and ways of the saints shall be *after* they have met the Lord in the air, and *before* they are led into the place which He has gone to prepare for them; and then He will present them to the Father, "spotless and with exceeding joy."

WILLIAM MORRIS.

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THE REIGN OF GRACE.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth. . . . The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 14, 17.

"The law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. v. 20-21.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8-9.

GRACE is kindness, favour, benignity, free gift, undeserved blessing. Dispensation is the economy or arrangement during whose continuance God deals with men in any given way. Its duration is fixed by Him who does all things according to the counsel of His own will. The dispensation of the law began with Sinai in the wilderness, and ended with Calvary when the Lord was crucified. The dispensation of grace began when the Gospel was sent to the Gentiles, and will end when the Saviour comes for His Church. Then will begin the dispensation of judgment, or righteousness, when the Lord in righteousness will judge the earth. More strictly still, the dispensation, or reign of grace, began at the day of Pentecost, and will close at the second coming of Christ. This is the age or world in which it is our privilege to live; and when the next age, or world to come, shall begin, we, if we avail ourselves of the grace that now reigns, shall then reach a higher, better, and more perfect state of being than can be reached in the flesh.

The dispensation of grace has lasted already nearly nineteen centuries, a very long period in the estimation of beings so short-lived as we are, but God's eras, or ages, are not to be measured by our narrow conceptions. The distance before His eye; the circumference through which His thoughts range; and the ends to be served through countless ages by what He has done and will yet do in connection with this mysterious world, are all immeasurably beyond our ken. Our reach of sight is feeble. Much has been revealed, much more, in fact, than many of us think; but the unrevealed—because by us impossible of comprehension—must, from the nature of the case, be inconceivably vast in extent and wonderful in character. This much, however, is certain: God has been pleased to select man's dwelling-place as the scene of surprising exhibitions of His wisdom and power. He has made it the centre of influences that reach His own throne and stretch far away across ages upon ages, for which man has no arithmetic.

Hitherto all that we have seen, fearfully dark from the merely human point of view though much of it is, has nevertheless been of a progressive order from a lower to a higher state of things. Each movement on God's part has been in advance, a slow but

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steady development of some inconceivably great purpose upon which His mind has been fixed "From the beginning, ere ever the earth was." That the dispensation of grace, dating from the fall of Judaism, is such a step in advance, such an additional unfolding of a settled purpose of action, there can be no doubt. Hear the apostle of the nations, the great minister of grace to the world outside Judea: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men; manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testame; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance—which glory was to be done away—how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (2 Cor. iii. 1-11). This is admirable testimony to the superiority of the dispensation of grace over that of law; and the witness is unexceptionable, for he personally knew both dispensations. Besides, the words are not Paul's only, but the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit, the testimony of that Spirit who knows the mind of God.

Here, then, we see at once that the Christian age is incomparably superior to the Mosaic. It brings God so much nearer to His ultimate goal. He is not thrown back by the crime that "crucified the Lord of Glory," but makes it the occasion of rending the symbolic veil, of throwing down the partition which divided the Gentile from the Jew, of nailing to the cross the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, of abolishing—its purpose served—the entire ceremonialism of the Levitical code, of enlarging the locality upon which Divine light shone from a small province of the Roman Empire to the entire world, and of commissioning the messengers —not of law, but of grace—to carry tidings of mercy to every nation under heaven. The Jews have slain the Hope of the nation, to whom every part of their gorgeous ritualism pointed, and now that ritualism can no longer hold together. Its preparatory work is done, its testimony is delivered, its machinery set aside, and the nation itself disappears from the map of the world. The fall of Judea, and with it Judaism—for without the Temple Judaism is

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impossible—was to the eye of the Jew nothing but overwhelming disaster, a dismal, a terrific calamity; but in God's wondrous plan it was the reconciling of the world. When wicked hands killed the Prince of Life, God's hands opened wide, not to grasp hot thunderbolts to wrap our world in unquenchable fire, but to pour life and salvation across the vast deserts of idolatry, life and salvation without money, without price, without obedience to any law, freely, *freely*—it was the actual inauguration of the gentle dispensation of grace, the best, most blessed, most beneficent economy the world has hitherto seen. The special privileges of Judaism were contracted within a narrow sphere; the dispensation of the law was for the Jews only; and during its continuance God "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts xiv. 6). The times of that ignorance He overlooked, but now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent. The dispensation of grace is for the world, and it turns upon the Divine point of simple belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a dispensation of testimony regarding the Son of God; that God is in Him reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John iii. 16, 17). This testimony pervades the New Testament. Its sublime simplicity meets us constantly. "If we receive the witness of men," writes John, "the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because He believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 9, 10).

The presentation of Divine testimony, the truth to be believed, is the grand feature of this economy. Hear what the Apostle Paul says about the subject of his ministry. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then,"—what am I and my fellow-apostles in consequence of this new and most merciful state of

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things?—"we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 14-21). This was apostolic ministry. It was a presentation to "sinners of the Gentiles," men who had not been placed under the dispensation of law, and who were living without God in the world, of the full benefits of a purely Divine scheme of reconciliation, on the simple ground of belief. If they would but believe the testimony, all the blessings to which that testimony referred should be theirs. No matter what their character had been. There was no moral preparation required on their part, no obedience to any law exacted, no process of introductory improvement enjoined. Every objection is met, every difficulty removed, every barrier broken down; all things are ready: all things are of God; be ye reconciled. Accept the perfect reconciliation just as you are, here and now, without money, without price, without merit, without previous purification, for it is the dispensation of grace, of gift, not of works. The treasures of grace are opened, and the Sovereign, with Divine munificence, is giving, without stint, without question as to character, to all who come. Sunk in abominable idolatry, debased, polluted, unutterably vile you may be. Well, this is all known, and because it is all known, the arrangement has been so made as entirely and fully to meet your case. It is for you, the helpless; God's redeeming love through Christ comes to you, meets you, asks an entrance into your hearts, an abiding place in your souls. You are not asked to give, but to take; not to do work, but to "be reconciled." You are offered life, character, privilege, immortality as the gift of God.

Let any man read the loathsome description of heathendom in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans—a description fully borne out by such writings of the heathens themselves as have reached us, and by the testimony of our missionaries—and then ask himself what could meet the case of such persons, if it was to be met at all, but a system of transcendent grace, purely Divine in its origin and application? But the case of such brutalised, demonised human beings has been met successfully, triumphantly, millions of times. Just listen to this: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. i. 7, 8). In Rome! Ay, these are the very words. If grace won such triumphs *there*, the new dispensation has proved itself the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation.

In truth, the glorious character of God has been unfolding itself through past dispensations; over the darkness of the world's ignorance, and sin, and misery, His light shines, and by what He has

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done and is doing we see indeed that "God is love," and "God is light." For myself I most surely believe that the dark problem of the universe will be so solved by Him in due time as to command the admiration, wonder, and gratitude of every created intelligence. I believe without difficulty, nay, in my case the difficulty would be *not* to believe it—that the time is coming when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them," will be heard saying, "Blessing and honour and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 13). Nor will this universal concert of adoration be the result of an all-commanding power which may no longer be resisted, or of an all-subduing authority which makes continued opposition fruitless madness, but the spontaneous utterance of intelligent conviction that a wisdom so profound deserves the highest tribute of admiration, and a love so strong the most fervent expressions of praise. For though all-commanding power, as we shall see shortly, will be put forth for a specific purpose, and for a brief period, when Divine right asserts itself against diabolic usurpation, yet the great law of constraining love, the normal principle which overcomes evil with good, will unquestionably retain its ascendancy to the last, so that the loyalty of creaturehood will ultimately be the result of the grace of the Godhead.

The economy under which we live is both a development and an initiation. It illustrates the dispensations that have preceded it; it suggests the essential character of those that are to follow. It is itself neither a first nor a last economy, but an interpretation of its predecessors and a herald of the ages to come. It takes up man just as he is, a creature for whom law can do nothing, "in that it is weak through the flesh," and proposes to make him a new creature under the influence of Gospel, or good news from heaven. It finds him devil-possessed, and speaks of making him a temple of the Holy Spirit. It sees him wofully degraded, and utters in his ear words of deep significance concerning the formation in his heart of Christ the hope of glory. But from the indisputable fact that the mass of mankind are destitute, even under the reign of grace, of the character which results from the belief of the record, it is not too much to infer that the ages to come will witness fresh developments of the wisdom and love of God, yet all associated with and springing out of the priestly work and royal rights of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Some of the leading characteristics of the dispensation, which give it its peculiarity, may be briefly noted.

It is an age in which God deals with men *as individuals*. Nations are merged into the higher idea of a world, and social distinctions in the higher idea of humanity. Hence the Gospel of grace is preached alike, and on precisely the same terms, to Jew and Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free. There were saints

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among the aristocracy of Cæsar's household; there were elsewhere poor saints for whom it was necessary to collect the gifts of the charitable; but the parties thus distinguished in worldly circumstances had been addressed as sinners needing mercy, when the Gospel was first preached to them. They had been spoken to, not as nobles in the one case, and as peasants in the other, but as men who, in common with the entire race, had "come short of the glory of God," and salvation through Jesus by faith was set before them for acceptance. They did accept it, and thus became saints —men separated, set apart from a common to a sacred use, delivered from the slavery of sin into the freedom with which Christ makes free.

And so it is still. Salvation is proclaimed on the same principle to all ranks, classes, and conditions of men. There is no refined aspect of it for the cultured, and a more common one for the untrained. It is a "common salvation" for men who are altogether helpless without it. He who wields a sceptre and he that handles the plough are invited to the same feast. The man who counts his gold by millions, and the ragged beggar, are equally welcome to the royal dainties of God's priceless banquet. The philosopher who has discovered and described the laws of nature, and the peasant who cannot read the alphabet, are urged to come, and take, and live for ever. Caste, tribe, parentage, position, rank, class, country, are all nothing. The sinner and the Saviour alone come before us on this broad field of Divine beneficence, and if these meet and speak to each other, all is well. Not, be it observed, that Christianity ignores social classifications. So far from that, it fully recognises them; but its terms to every member of every class in society are precisely the same.

It is an age of *toleration*, that is, of Divine long-suffering and patience. The blasphemer is not stoned, the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day is not put to death, and the unclean is not driven beyond the pale of society. God waits with men; waits to be gracious; and bears long with the rejecters of His Son and the despisers of His grace. The overwhelming multitude are practical atheists. They are living without God in the world. He is to them as a Being who has no existence; and yet they are not smitten down by visible judgments, nor hurried away in His wrath. On the contrary, they are daily watched over and cared for by His bountiful providence. Their wants are supplied, their necessities are anticipated, their lot in life is arranged. To many of them He gives gold and grandeur, and much worldly influence. His sun shines upon, His showers soften their broad acres. But they return no love, feel no gratitude, express no thanks, and they continue from year to year turning a deaf ear to the message of reconciliation, resisting the Holy Spirit, and trampling on the blood of Christ. Still, however, He bears with them, and looks with unutterable complacency upon the Man of His right hand, who

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continues to make intercession for the transgressors. This feature of the dispensation is very remarkable, and real Christians, but with limited views of the Divine arrangements, have often been startled by it.

But there is another aspect of this day of toleration, which, in some respects, is still more remarkably illustrative of the Divine forbearance. There are those who give Him the bended knee instead of prayer, and the words of sacred song upon the lips instead of praise; those who profess to seek a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, but who are all the time wedded to their worldly lusts, and bent upon the things of time and sense as the highest good of human existence. They profess to be the followers of Christ; but they lie unto the Lord with their tongues, and mock Him by a miserable formalism, without heart or life. Yet our God bears with them too. How gracious He is, how slow to anger!

And then His own children must bear testimony to His patience. They feel that they cannot do otherwise, for they often wonder that He has borne so long with their deficiencies, shortcomings, errors, spots, and manifold follies.

Another important feature of this age is, that it is *an elective dispensation*. This fact is singularly significant. It has meanings which touch both God and man. So far as God is concerned, it sheds fresh glory upon His name; but it tells a dismal tale of blindness and stupidity on the part of men. If God has adopted the principle of election in a dispensation of grace—grace within grace, so to speak—you may be sure that there are most weighty reasons for it. But that He has adopted that principle is beyond dispute. Various views are taken of New Testament election by the different theological schools; but that the doctrine is there no one dreams of denying. I have no wish, at this time, to disturb either the Arminian or the Calvinistic theory of election; although I accept neither as usually presented: my object being, first, to state a demonstrable fact, and then to look at the weighty lessons it suggests. I say demonstrable fact, for do we not see the visible evidence of it around us daily? We are witnesses that God is taking out of the nations a people for His name. We are personally, intimately acquainted with men who love God and delight in His service. We also know men who cannot bear to think of Him, and whose whole lives are spent in opposition to His will. But, remember, the dispensation of grace has preached salvation full and free to all. Whence then this marked distinction? The answer, so far as the *fact* is concerned, is, some have believed the truth, and some have not; and the answer, so far as the *doctrine* which lies behind the fact is concerned, is, had not God chosen, and, in consequence of choice, drawn to Himself a certain number, none would have believed. To prevent the defeat of the great purpose of love, God chose His people in Christ from before the foundation

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of the world, and we now live under an elective dispensation, during the progress of which they are gathered. On the one side of this great fact we see the darkness into which the human race had fallen, and the enmity of their hearts against God, which would have universally hindered their reception of the Gospel: and, on the other side, we see God, as usual, making sure of every part of His great plan of wisdom and grace.

An elective principle at the heart of a dispensation of grace, teaches two things of supreme importance. First, that such a dispensation cannot be final; and, secondly, that the elective principle, instead of proving that none but the elect will be saved, proves just the contrary. "Simeon hath declared," said James, at the conference of apostles and elders, on the question of compelling Christians to keep the law of Moses, "how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name." This is the election of the present dispensation; but what follows? A quotation from the prophet Amos, "that afterward the residue of men will seek after the Lord" (Acts xv. 13-17). But it is clearer still in the following words: "Of His own will begat He us, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (Jas. i. 18). Surely the first-fruits are not the entire produce of the harvest field, but the pledge and proof of the abundance that is to follow. We have also a vision of those who stand on Mount Sion with the Lamb, and concerning them we are told, "These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb." And it is *after this*, when the Church is completed in glory, that John saw "Another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue" (Rev. xiv. 6). And still further, it is after the vision of the Holy City that we are told that the nations shall walk in the light of it.

The sublime truth is that election is of the Church, to constitute that peculiarly honoured assembly, the body of Christ, the nature of which is clearly described in Scripture. The action of election ceases when the *Church* is completed, which it will be at the close of the present dispensation. The multitudes that will be saved afterwards, will not be included in the peculiar body called "the Church of the Firstborn." All the dark shadows which have been supposed to fall from election, have actually fallen from a misapprehension of its place in the councils of heaven and the dispensation of grace. It is a glory and a joy as the harbinger of the vast harvests of happy men that are to follow. It secures the Church, which is the body of Christ; but to say that none are to have peace and joy but the Church, is to say what Scripture contradicts. The entire mistake has sprung from the groundless assumption that this is the final dispensation. Besides, every careful student of the New Testament must see that the dispensa-

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tion of grace comes to an end while the majority of men are still strangers to God; it follows, therefore, that the introduction of the elective principle during this age is in pursuance of some great purpose to be developed in the next dispensation. All nations are to be blessed in the Messiah, and to call Him blessed (Ps. lxxii). This principle, therefore, is a bright light thrown forward to give us joy concerning future generations in our world, when we, if members of Christ's Church, shall be with the King in His celestial palace, not in the character of subjects—though that we shall gladly own—but as His fellow heirs, His body. To look upon this peculiarly honoured assembly of the redeemed, therefore, as including all that shall be made happy in the Lord in future ages, is as absurd as to say that the first sheaf is the entire harvest, or that no one shares in the privileges and honours of British citizenship, except the Privy Council and the members of Her Majesty's Household.

Finally, it is *the dispensation of the Spirit.* The Holy Spirit, by the application of the truth concerning Jesus, convinces, regenerates, enlightens the mind, leads the believer onward, comforts amidst trouble, waters the graces He has himself implanted in the heart, nourishes the fruits of righteousness, which are to the glory of God, draws us into communion with the Lord and with one another, and in many other ways nurtures the new life, and makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. In the personal absence of our Lord, waiting the time appointed of the Father for entering on His kingly rights, the Holy Spirit is with the Church, according to His promise, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (John xiv. 16), that is, during the age, or dispensation; which exactly corresponds with the last words in Matthew's Gospel, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" where the same Greek word is used, meaning, not the end of the material world but the end of the present dispensation. The Spirit of the Lord is with His people, and has been so ever since the day of Pentecost; and, therefore, when men tell us that the second coming of the Lord means a spiritual coming, they speak unwisely, for in this sense, blessed be His name! our Saviour has never left us.

I have said that the present age is the dispensation of the Spirit; but I do not mean by that that His agency will cease to be employed on earth when He has completed the Church and seen it safe in the glory, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." The work of the Holy Spirit, like that of the Father and the Son, continues through periods long after the completion of the number of saved ones that constitute that heavenly assembly, the Church. The time comes when God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh; a type and pledge of which was given on the Day of Pentecost, when a few unlettered Galileans were miraculously qualified to speak of the wonderful works of God in a number of languages, of which

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they knew absolutely nothing. To quote any of the numerous prophecies which refer to this outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the dispensation which follows the completion of the Church is not necessary. The fact is repeatedly declared, and it substantiates and confirms the correctness of the views maintained in this paper regarding the dispensation of grace under which we live, and from which it will be solely our own fault if we do not obtain the highest and most glorious position to which we can look forward —the privilege, the honour, and the glory of being among the nearest to Christ of all created intelligences throughout the ages of ages which have yet to revolve before the purpose of God in creation is fully realised. EDITOR.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

THE seventy weeks of Dan. ix. 25: "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to *build Jerusalem*, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks," &c.

Accurate attention to the words used, will save us from being led into error as to the starting point of the seventy weeks: "From the going forth of the commandment *to restore and to build Jerusalem*."

There were *four commandments* or decrees that went forth, viz.:—

1. Cyrus to Ezra (i. 1), B.C. 536.
2. Darius to Ezra (vi. 1-12), B.C. 519.
3. Artaxerxes to Ezra (vii. 7-11), B.C. 468.
4. Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (ii. 1-5), B.C. 455.

Unless we note the defining words we shall be at a loss to discover to which of these decrees reference is made.

(1.) Cyrus's decree to Ezra (i. 1) is confined exclusively to the building of the *temple:* and mention of this, and "the house," "the altar," the "house of the Lord," &c., is made in chaps. i.-v. no less than 22 times. True, their enemies "wrote a letter against" them (iv.) (accusing them falsely,* we may well believe) of rebuilding "the rebellious and bad city," and so their work was stopped "until another commandment shall be given."

This, then, cannot be the decree referred to in Dan. ix. 25, quite apart from any difficulty of fitting in the date.

(2.) Darius's decree to Ezra (vi. 1-12). In this chapter, twelve times do we find this decree confined to "the house," "the temple," "the house of God."

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* If the accusation were true, it proves still more clearly that they were violating the terms of the decree which had been made.

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This, then, cannot be the decree.

(3.) Artaxerxes's decree to Ezra (vii. 7-11). This decree is confined particularly to the permission that was given to "*the people of Israel* and of his priests and Levites in my realm which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem." It declares what they were to carry with them "for the house of their God which is at Jerusalem;" but there is not one word about *building*, either the temple or the city.

This, then, cannot be the decree referred to.

(4.) Artaxerxes's decree to Nehemiah (ii. 1-5). This is declared specially to relate to Nehemiah's request, "That thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, *that I may build it*" (ii. 5). So it pleased the king to send me" (v. 6). Consequently we read now nothing of the temple, for that was already built. Many also of the people were there, but there was no city. We read nothing now but of building "the city," its "walls," its "gates," and its "houses." We read of nothing else.

This, then, *must be* the decree referred to in Dan. ix. 25,* whatever may be the difficulties created or removed. Those who have theories must be prepared to correct them, those who have them not, will be prepared to learn.†

It is difficult to imagine how any should have missed the plain, and apparently unmistakable, language of verses 26 and 27.

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* It should be noted that Daniel's prayer had been about "*the city*,"—see Dan. ix. 16, 18, 19, 24, 25.

† There can be little or no doubt that the 20th year of Artaxerxes was B.C. 455. It was so originally put in our English version. But Bishop Lloyd, at a subsequent revision, altered it to B.C. 445, to make it agree with a theory of his own, and it so stands at the present moment in our Bibles. But Petavius, Vitringa, Kruger, Hengstenberg, Tregelles, and others, all agree with Ussher's date, and make it 455 B.C.

It may be well to add here, to make this part of the subject complete, that there are 3 periods in Dan. ix., viz.:—7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week, making in all 70 sevens or *hebdomads* (as the word means). After seven weeks and "threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" (Dan. ix. 26). Therefore, at the end of (7 + 7 =) 49 years + (62 + 7 =) 434 years, which together make 483 years, Messiah was to be cut off. This brings us to A.D. 29 inasmuch as 455 + 29 makes 484 or rather 483 years, allowing one year for the adjustment of the two eras (it being only one year from Jan. 1 B.C. 1 to Jan. 1 A.D. 1). All the best authorities agree in making the Crucifixion A.D. 29; but we need go no further here than our own Bibles, for the date of our Lord's birth is given, at the beginning of the Gospels, as "Before the account called Anno Domini the fourth year," or "The fourth year before the common account called Anno Domini."

In Luke iii. 23, it is stated that Jesus at His baptism was "about thirty years of age." His ministry is on all hands allowed to have been about three years, and yet at the close of the Gospels the date of the crucifixion (or "cutting off of Messiah") is given as A.D. 33. But if He were born four years before A.D. this would of necessity be A.D. 29.

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For the restoration and rebuilding of *the city* having been foretold in v. 25, its destruction is also foretold in v. 26. The agents are "the people of the prince that shall come." As the destruction of Jerusalem was by the Romans, "the prince that shall come" must also be a Roman.

Moreover, "the prince" is the nominative to the verbs "confirm," &c., in v. 27, expressed by the pronoun "he—" "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."

Could any have referred this to the Messiah, if they had noticed that this "covenant" is mentioned again in other passages as having been made and broken by "the prince of the covenant" Dan. xi. 22, (who is the same as "the vile person" xi. 21, and "the little horn," viii. 9, 23-25)? By him the covenant is made and afterwards broken, xi. 28, 30, 32. This cannot be the Messiah, nor is it the Messiah who causes "the sacrifice and oblation to cease" in the midst of the last week (which is still future), as is clear from viii. 11-13, xi. 31, and xii. 11, where it is also connected with the setting up of the "abomination of desolation." Let those who doubt read carefully and accurately the passages referred to in this paragraph.

The 26th verse describes the present dispensation from the crucifixion of Christ to the rise of the Anti-Christ, while the 27th verse describes the last week (or 7 years of Anti-Christ's actings), divided as it is into two parts of 1260 days, and 3½ years or 42 months.*

E. W. BULLINGER, D.D.

DANTE IN THE PULPIT.

A CLASS of theological ideas is gathered from sermons, songs, and prayers; from hymn-books, newspaper articles, and works of pious fiction of the dramatic order, like Milton's "Paradise Lost;" or, if urgent motive to repentance is wanted, from Dante's *Inferno*. We have heard of the fame of Homer, the Grecian bard; yet the influence of Dante has been nearly as great. The *Inferno* has penetrated the world. If images of horror are sought after, it is to

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* The following diagram illustrates the whole 70 weeks:—

B.C.	"Seven weeks."	"Three Score and two weeks."	A.D. 29. Messiah "cut off." "Israel lo-ammi."	"One week."
445.	49 years.	434 years.	Hos. i. 9, Isaiah liv. 7, 8, the present interval.	1260 days | 42 months or 3½ years.
				7 years.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon Thy people and upon Thy holy city," &c.

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his works that all subsequent ages have turned. We are told that when the historians of the French Revolution wished to convey an idea of the utmost agonies they were called on to pourtray, they contented themselves with saying it equalled all that the imagination of Dante had conceived of the terrible. Modern novelists, as well as modern ministers, have found in his prolific mind the storehouse from which they have drawn their noblest imagery, the chord by which to strike the profoundest feelings of the human heart. Revivalists, so-called, have obtained their outfit of horrid imagery here, and *Inferno*, with its unequalled and exhaustless stores, has been laid under tribute. Long since, eighty editions of his poems had been published in Europe, and yet the demand increases. Scholars claim that Milton himself was largely indebted to Dante's poems for many of his most powerful images. Byron is said to have inherited, at first or second hand, his poetic mantle, and borrowed from the same source his most moving conceptions; while Schiller wove them artfully in a noble historic mirror, and they inspired the dreams of Goethe.

I have read his great poem, "Divina Commedia," with admiration of the ability of its author. It consists of dialogues, descriptions, and didactic precepts. It is a vision of the realms of everlasting punishment, of expiation or purgatory, and of bliss, in the *invisible* world; visions not found in the Bible. I wish to quote some of his imagery of the infernal regions, as a sample of much more that the clergy have read and appropriated, who preach the Gospel (?) of eternal torture, after the style, not of the Bible but *Dante*. By way of introduction I may say that Dante was born at Florence, Italy, 1265; a dark period, surely, His teacher was Brunetto Latini, and Dante profited by his instructions. His talents and his feelings were precocious, for he fell in love with Beatrice, whom he afterwards immortalized in verse, at the tender age of ten years. He did not marry his first love, but at the age of twenty-six he wedded another, with whom he lived unhappily for a time and then parted. He was an ardent Catholic, and wrote several poetical works; but the one I have named gave him the greatest fame. It consists of three parts—hell, purgatory, and heaven. Of it, a writer justly says: "In this astonishing production, Dante does indeed 'on horror's head horrors accumulate.' For boundless and *wild* imagination, for gloomy grandeur, for terrific energy, it has no superior; while, on the other hand, it often charms by exquisite sweetness, simplicity, and grace." The best English translation is Cary's. Dante died at Ravenna, Sept. 14, 1321. Let me now quote a collection of *awful images* in a few lines. Of hell he says:—

> "Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
> Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
> That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
> Horrible languages, outcries of woe,

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Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
Made up a tumult, that forever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

. . . . .

I then: Master! What doth aggrieve them thus,
That they lament so loud? He straight replied:
That I will tell thee briefly. Those of death
No hope may entertain."—*Inferno*, c. 3.

Modern sacred poetry has it thus:—

"To linger in eternal pain,
And death forever fly."

We know the sentiment concerning death to be unscriptural, therefore unsound, hence we reject it. In the above Dante is portrayed to the life. What a collection of awful images in a few lines! Poor creatures! God is not good enough to allow them even the "hope of death!" Next mark the lines of *Inferno*, when the gates of hell were approached, and the inscription over them appeared.

Behold the dismal word-painting:—

"Through me you pass into the city of woe;
Through me you pass into eternal pain;
Through me among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved;
To rear me was the task of power divine,
Supernal wisdom, and primeval love.
Before me, things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here."—c. 3.

What a strange use of language here; "power," "wisdom," and "*love!*"—all concerned in building a place of useless torture of the most unspeakably awful kind! Dante, being exalted politically, and the opposite party getting the victory, he was degraded and sentenced to death by burning; but escaping, wandered a fugitive. This explains the melancholy tone which pervades his writings. In them he seemed to take vengeance on the generation which had persecuted and exiled him, by picturing before them such a hell as he thought they richly deserved. In the monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, a wild and solitary retreat in the territory of Gubbio, and in a tower belonging to the Conte Falcucci, in the same district, his immortal work was written. Hear him describe the third circle in hell, on whom burning sand falls perpetually:—

"Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,
All weeping piteously to different laws
Subjected; for on earth some lay supine,
Some crouching close were seated, others paced
Incessantly around; the latter tribe

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More numerous, those fewer who beneath
The torment lay, but louder in their grief.
O'er all the sand fell, slowly wafting down,
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hushed.
As, in the torrid Indian clime, the son
Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band
Descending, solid flames, that to the ground
Came down."—c. 14.

The first appearance of Molebolge, the worst place of punishment in hell, is thus described:—

"There is a place within the depths of hell
Called Malebolge, all of rock dark stained
With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep
That round it circling winds. Right in the midst
Of that abominable region yawns
A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame
Due time shall tell. The circle that remains,
Throughout its round, between the gulf and base
Of the high, craggy banks, successive forms
Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised."—c. 18.

This is the outward appearance of the worst domain of hell; here the worst punishment may be expected. It had many frightful abysses. Next follows his description of the first:—

"To the summit reaching, stood
To view another gap, within the round
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.
Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.
In the Venetians' arsenal as boils
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear
Their unsound vessels in the wintry clime;
. . . . . .
So, not by force of fire but art divine,
Boil'd here a glutinous mass, that round
Lined all the shore beneath. I that beheld,
But therein not distinguish'd, save the bubbles
Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell
Heave, and by turns subsiding, fall.
. . . . . .
Behind me I beheld a devil black,
That running up, advanced along the rock.
Ah! what fierce cruelty his look bespake.
In act how bitter did he seem. With wings
Buoyant outstretch'd, and feet of nimblest tread,
His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,
Was with a sinner charged; by either haunch
He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.
. . . . . .
Him dashing down, o'er the rough rock he turned
Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed
Sped with like eager haste. The other sank,
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.

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But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,
Cried—Here the hallow'd visage saves not; here
Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave;
Wherefore, if thou desire, we rend thee not.
Take heed thou mount not o'er the pitch. This said,
They grappled him with more than hundred hooks,
And shouted—Cover'd thou must sport thee here;
So if thou canst, in secret must thou filch."

—*Cary's Dante*, c. 21.

At such images of horror in endless variety we sicken; and since they are not found in the Book of books, the Bible, but only in Dante's *Inferno* and in the writings of his copyists, and those who have adopted Pagan, Mohammedan, or Roman Catholic views of hell, we may neither believe nor advocate such views. Clear light is shining upon the subject of man's nature and destiny, for which we ought to be thankful. Eminent and devout men are beginning to see that such nightmare views are not taught in the Bible, but only in an imaginary *Inferno* of the dark ages; and are the product of dense darkness and not of the light. Reading, as I have done, the pages of Dante's "Divina Commedia," you will understand where certain orthodox preachers get their ideas and definite knowledge of the infernal regions, where sinners of every grade and class are compelled to go, when they die, through the gateways of volcanoes! But enough of this!

C. P. D.

WORDS OF WITNESSES.

THE THRONE.—There is no *personal* likeness or resemblance of Christ seen upon the throne, but one like unto a jasper and a sardine stone—the Alpha and the Omega, the Aleph and Taut of the Hebrew alphabet. And thus it is manifest that the object of the vision, as far as the occupant of the throne is concerned, is to fasten the attention of the Seer, and of the reader, upon the fact, that He is the God of Israel —the whole symbolism being borrowed from circumstances connected with the Jewish Tabernacle. The throne indeed is encircled with a rainbow, to show that the God of Israel is also the God of nature and the God of Providence; the throne of Him who made the unconditional covenant with Noah and all the creatures. The emerald colour, which is a combination of yellow and blue, represents His condescension, (for the emerald is the colour of the grass, earth's carpet,) and His moral glory and excellency, as we have shown more largely, when treating of the colours of the Tabernacle. The twenty-four thrones occupied by the Elders are seen to be on a par with the throne of God, and this is perfectly intelligible when we remember that they symbolize the perfect knowledge and wisdom of Christ.

The lightnings, thunders, and voices proceeding from the throne, and the seven lamps burning before the throne, indicate the Divine rule

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over a world which is still in revolt against the Divine authority. Much of the imagery of this verse is borrowed from the circumstances attendant upon the giving of the law on Sinai. The Apocalyptic Seer now sees in the inner circle, between the throne and the Elders, four living creatures, representing the executive action of God—four being the number of executive completeness. Such, then, is the glorious vision presented to the Apostle:—the Occupant of the throne, glowing with the effulgence of the jasper and the sardine stone—the arching rainbow of emerald, flinging its softened beauty round the throne—the living creatures, in their majesty and force, waiting to carry out the Divine mandates—and the four-and-twenty Elders, in their pure white robes and crowns of gold, communicating to John, and, through John, to the Church, the secret activities and purposes of the Divine government.—"The Closing Days of Christendom." Burlington B. Wale.

THE KEY.—We have in the second page of the earliest of books, (Gen. iii. 15) the germ of all history, sacred and profane. Here we have the Key to all events in the history of true religion in the world to the end of time, all through the ages. Here we have, moreover, in the first portion of all authentic history, the key which will unlock the wonderful history of the Bible. The unity, variety, and harmony of the history which we have in the Bible is one of its greatest charms, as well as the most convincing proof of its Divine origin. Our familiarity with the Bible sometimes blinds us to the grandeur of this conception of a history of the whole human race through millions of generations on to the last syllable of recorded time. The scene of the history changes from the Garden of Eden to the tent of the Patriarchs, to the palace of Pharaoh, to the wilderness of Sinai, to the mountains of Moab, to the temple of Jerusalem, to the court of Ahab, to the chamber of Babylon. The historians are kings and lawgivers, shepherds and husbandmen, fishermen and publicans, physicians and tentmakers—all looking backward to this fructifying, world-embracing germ of faith and hope, and joyously anticipating its perfect fulfilment in the consummated victory of the woman's seed. The smallest event, the most trifling incident, the most insignificant person is singled out from all that would have interested other chroniclers or seemed worthy of being transmitted to future generations, and placed in the fullest light of history as the only transactions worthy of being remembered, because on them was to depend the whole future destiny of the world. It matters not whether the words of the Old Testament were copied from earlier records or written down by immediate inspiration of God. The miracle is not in the words of Scripture, but in the superhuman insight of selection, in the harmony between the earliest record and the latest fulfilment, in the answers which the earliest of books has given to the latest of questions, not only in reference to the origin of the world and the origin of man, but also in regard to the origin of religion, and, what is still more wonderful, in regard to the humanity of Christ, and the victory of Christ over sin and suffering and death.—"The Latest of Questions Answered in the Earliest of Books."—William Anderson, M.A.

THE END OF EVIL.—We have in this—almost the last chapter in the

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Bible—the final issue of that struggle with evil in its two forms of sin and suffering, the beginning of which is described in the third chapter of Genesis. The beginning and the end of the Bible has been placed side by side, like two consecutive leaves of the same book. The imagery of the latter book has been borrowed from the earlier, but between the two chapters lies the whole history of mankind in its progress from the untried innocence of the garden through long ages of suffering and trial to the countless multitude in the Eternal City, who have been purified by trial and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Knowledge is there, but without its attendant danger, for it will be the knowledge of Christ, whom to know is life eternal. There is no evil to be known, for evil is banished, and death has been destroyed. The edict forbidding approach to the tree of life has been cancelled, for sin has been taken away. To sinful man eternal life would be eternal misery. The Lamb, as it had been slain, is in the midst of the Throne, as the pledge of pardon, reconciliation, and holiness. When the body of sin has been destroyed, pain and suffering, which are the lengthening shadows of the twilight of the moral world, will no longer darken into death. There will be no more night, for weary limbs have ceased to crave repose. Sinless men no longer fear to meet God, and need no shelter from His presence. God is the light of the Eternal City, communion with Him is the delight of its inhabitants, and He dries up the fountain of tears which sin had caused to flow.—Idem.

The Great Design.—In the Bible we have the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega of the wondrous system of Divine love and mercy, wisdom and power. In Gen. i. 1 we read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and in Rev. xxi. 6, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. . . . Behold I make all things new." The wonderful Book opens with the creation of the world and closes with the promise of another and a new world. The present and past ages, with the coming days of human existence, span the gap between the present and the coming *cosmos*. The present life is the true intermediate state of man. He lives under a provisional, not a permanent government; the organization of the heaven and earth in which we live, with all its physical, civil, and social elements, forms a means to an end yet future. The world and its inhabitants await new decrees of Divine destiny. When these are executed the design of the Great Architect in the creation of man and his dwelling-place will have been accomplished, and will be read and known of all men. His wisdom, power, and love will be vindicated and declared, and the grand jubilee of earth's redemption shall be announced in the royal proclamation, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. The former things have passed away." Every curse shall be removed, and "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."—"Reply to Ingersoll." A. B. Magruder.

The Word Immortal.—The Apostle Paul is the only writer in the whole Bible who makes use of the word immortal or immortality. He

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never applies it to sinners. He never applies it to either righteous or wicked in this world. He never applies it *to man's soul* at all, either before or after death. He speaks of it as an attribute of the King Eternal (1 Tim. i. 17). He declares that He is the only possessor of it (1 Tim. vi. 16). He presents it as an object which men are to *seek after* by patient continuance in well doing (Rom. ii. 7). He speaks of it as *revealed* or brought to light (not in heathen philosophy, but) in the Gospel of the Son of God (2 Tim. i. 10). He defines the period when it shall be "put on" by the saints of God, and fixes it at the resurrection, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear (1 Cor. xv. 52-54). Therefore he never taught the immortality of the *soul* as it is now taught; and hence, when he declared that sinners should be destroyed, or perish or die, or be burned or devoured by fire, he did so without any "mental reservations" or "theological definitions." In other words, he said what he meant, and meant what he said.—"Pauline Theology." H. L. Hastings.

THE CONSUMMATION.—The "glorious body" of the Divine Saviour is the prototype of the spiritual body, in which every one of His own shall be immortalized at His return in glory. When the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, His body had not undergone any kind of change; and it must needs have been so, for otherwise His disciples could not have identified Him, and consequently could not have been the witnesses of His resurrection. But when He ascended, and they could not any longer behold Him, His body of humiliation was changed into "His glorious body." He was "received up (*en doxee*) in glory." At His return the bodies of His saints shall be changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. Yea, moreover, the redeemed and saved and regenerate shall be wholly conformed to the likeness of their immortal and glorified Head; for they are predestinated of God, "to be conformed to the likeness of His Son that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren." All the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him, and that fulness shall permeate the whole multitude of His brethren, in everlasting union and communion with Himself, THE FIRSTBORN. They all shall be one, in God the Father and in the Son; the Holy Spirit being the Bond of that immortal oneness. Dwelling in God, and God dwelling in them, all shall be "filled with all the fulness of God."—"What is Truth?" W. Morris, M.D.

MAN'S ONLY HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

An Exposition of Christ's Argument against the Sadducees.

BY WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

No. VIII.

23. EASY it is to understand the soulical existence,—the natural body, or mode of being,—for in that condition we are now. Its life depends on the breathing process; and when respiration terminates, the soul, or man a soul, the man himself, who had exhibited such wonderful

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capacities and undergone such wonderful experiences, hastens to the dust. In the resurrection, the sainted dead spring forth to a second life; and life too in a new form on a higher scale of existence. Then comes the "spiritual body," or form of being, of which we may comprehend this much at least, that it is not to be soulical, like the one they are done with for ever.

Both conditions of humanity are *corporeal*, for man will always be so. The first mode of being was the soulical; the second is to be spiritual, but still in its elements and structure material or organic in some way, however refined and seraphically endowed. They who appear at length in the spiritual form will understand it, as those in the animal or soulical fairly comprehend its distinguishing peculiarities; and we can afford to rest in contentment till the mighty and mysterious transformation has been effected by Heaven's infinite will. The subject is overwhelming in its grandeur and proportions. In this scene we can only acquire dim and exceedingly imperfect notions of its grace and majesty. And to think that Divine love puts such an existence within our reach! God grant that at length we may cease to be soulical and become spiritual beings, as this enrapturing description of the "bloom and wonder" of humanity promises and displays to the faith of those "who by patient continuance in well-doing SEEK FOR GLORY, HONOUR AND IMMORTALITY" (Rom. ii. 7),

24. To this, the final and transcendent state of the redeemed, the Apostle Paul seems to allude in Heb. xii. 23,—"Ye are come . . . to the spirits of just men made perfect." The word *seems* is purposely employed by us, for we acknowledge the language to be marked by a certain degree of obscurity. According to orthodox interpreters, it, of course, is remarkably plain, as they find many other things to be after assuming that man is the composite existence described in their standards. But we have discovered most ample authority to reject their teaching on that question, as on other correlated points of serious importance. Even here, admitting their doctrine about the spirit of man, the statement of the sacred writer is not as clearly correspondent with their theory of perfection and heaven for saints at death as they would have us believe. According to them, the perfected spirits mentioned in the text are the spirits of the righteous men who had entered into their Lord's presence when the tie uniting them to the corruptible organism was broken; and to these disembodied essences living Christians have come, precsely as they had come to the heavenly Jerusalem and the innumerable company of angels; come to Jerusalem above by right of citizenship in course of time to be fully realized; come to the angels by heirship of their joy, and services and fellowship.

Unfortunately for this view, the subject of the participle in the original rendered "made perfect," is not the spirits, but "just men." Exactly translated, the clause is this,—Ye are come (supplied from verse 22) *to the spirits of the perfected just*—men being understood. In other words, it is "just men" who are said to have been perfected, not their spirits, or the spirits of such men, in the sense in which this phraseology is now used. The difference between the apostolic statement and the one put in its room is so great as to destroy the article of faith built upon it, viz., that at death the spirits of the regenerate enter on a perfect existence

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before the throne; at any rate, it leaves the doctrine baseless, so far as this portion of Holy Writ is concerned. Hence we must seek another exposition, one fairly elucidative of the terms under review, harmonious with the general teaching of Scripture as to man, and prophetic announcements concerning the future condition of the unsaved in particular. To find it, let us inquire—

1st. When are just men made perfect? At death? No; for then they withdraw into silence, and are detained prisoners in the enemy's land. Their souls, that is, they themselves, are left in Sheol, and of necessity see corruption. When the Lord returns they will be recalled to existence, and in a form after the model of His own glorious person. All scriptural hope points to that stupendous forth-putting of resurrecting volition on His part; and it is a pity to mislead confiding hearers by an assurance of life, when at the final hour there is the total cessation of it; of glory forthwith, when there is the blackness of darkness so long as the prison doors remain closely barred and locked.

Do we not read in the same epistle from which the quotation before us is made—"These all having obtained a good report through faith, *received not the promise;* God having provided (or foreseen) some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (xi. 39, 40)? In other language, we are all, in whatever age we may have chanced to appear in the world, to be perfected in being, in inheritance, in royal dignity, and in bliss, at once and together. No one is to have priority over another, as would be the case if the common dogma of perfection to individual saints at death were an indubitable fact. In addressing the Thessalonians, the same teacher affirms that the living are to have no advantage, in point of time, over slumbering disciples, who are to rise immediately before the living are changed; and so the whole vast multitude in the "book of life," or on the roll of immortality, are to be perfected at once by the descended Redeemer. One other question remains.

2nd. How are the "just" to be perfected when the Lord comes again the second time? We reply, by being made "spiritual" existences, according to the 46th verse of 1 Cor., 15th chapter. Their new life will not be soul-life, but spirit-life; and since with soul-life they were souls, so with spirit-life they will be spirits, a form of being nobler infinitely than the first, though in present circumstances we can scarcely, with our limited intelligence and information, approach the outer fringe of its constitution and grandeur.

In the verse, part of which we are attempting to understand, we are first taught that believers in Christ have come "to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written (*margin*, enrolled) in heaven." There is a striking peculiarity here; nothing is said by the inspired author about any section of the general assembly and church of the firstborn being already in the celestial abodes. Neither in this place, nor in other places, knows he anything about the church in heaven and the church on earth. To him, none of the ransomed were as yet personally in the better world. Their *names*, and that is all, were inscribed on the roll of the predestined heirs of eternal felicity. Having mentioned this fact, he rises naturally to a loftier matter of blissful contemplation in the testimony, "Ye are come . . . to the spirits of

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the perfected just;" and thereby he not only repeats the assurance of celestial glory, but casts a ray of light, as it appears to us, on the magnificence of their destiny: as in another epistle (Eph ii. 6) he avers they were already seated "together in heavenly places in Christ," so here he testifies they had come— that is, in anticipation—"to the spirits of the perfected just,"—perfected by an exercise of omnific energy exalting those that were once so lowly to spirit being and spirit of life.

25. Though by an effort of the understanding, as lately remarked, we are scarcely able to touch the outer verge of this theme,—the "spiritual body," or heavenly mode of existence,—the devoutly inquiring mind may be aided in its meditation thereon by studying the Life of the Son of God between His resurrection and ascension to glory. Merely in its physical facts, it is an astonishing record. He is real and corporeal as before His decease; He walks, is touched, He eats and converses with His friends and disciples as prior to His crucifixion. Suddenly He vanishes from their midst, or appears in their company when arrangements had been made to hinder any ordinary visitor finding access to their presence. Now He is in this locality, and forthwith unexpectedly in another and distant place. And what is even more striking, He apparently manifests Himself to His old and beloved attendants not always in the same form (Mark xvi. 12), about which there is a mystery we attempt not to unravel. He could be visible or invisible, as He preferred, like the God-sent messengers who have visited our world from the upper spheres. Finally, as He travelled not in the ordinary way from one scene to another, and from one pious band to another, so He ascended calmly from a mountain to the regions of the blessed, as by an exercise of His own volition, in the sublime envelopment of imperishable glory. But to this must be added the visible splendour with which He is there permanently invested, a splendour of which the transfiguration was the prophecy and symbol, and clothed in which He appeared to John, banished for His sake to the desolate island of Patmos, when "His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. i. 16). Read in the light of all these facts, the triumphant eloquence of the great Apostle assumes a stupendous import, before which the lowly child of God may well be struck dumb with profoundest amazement,—"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY!" (1 Cor. xv. 49, 54.)

IMPRESSIONS MADE ON THE AUDIENCE BY THE REPLY.

26. After explaining the argument against the non-resurrection tenet of the Sadducees, we may, not without advantage, consider the effect which it produced on the hearers. In our estimate it was valid and unanswerable; how was it regarded by those to whom it was first addressed? This is the impression it left on the questioners, Matt. xxii. 34,—"The Pharisees heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence." By the promiscuous company it was thus viewed, verse 33, —"When the multitude heard this, they were *astonished* at His doctrine."

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Thus it affected one of the Scribes, Mark xii. 28,—"Having heard them reasoning together," he bore witness that Jesus "had answered them well;" but in Luke xx. 39, it is said more of the same class avowed their approval: "Certain of the Scribes answering said, Master, Thou hast *well said*,"—that is, with wisdom and success.

Such was the verdict, so to speak, of the large and complex jury who heard the case; and the Reply so satisfied those in the audience inclined to cavil at any article in His doctrine, or to perplex Him as a teacher of religion, that their attacks would only end in their own discomfiture, that Luke adds (xx. 40), "after that they durst not ask him any question at all." Of course, the verdict, as we have named it, consisting of the silence of the questioners, the astonishment of the promiscuous throng, the testimony of the Scribes, and the caution which the answer wrought in the minds of all disposed to interrogate, from motives entitling them to blame, is not irrefragable evidence that the reasoning was sound and efficient for its aim. Had they declined to admit its strength, that would have been no assurance to us that it was impotent and a failure. Of its quality we can judge for ourselves; and, apart from the unmeasured inspiration of the Speaker, we can discern the logic of His method and the triumph of His plea. But while this is true, we acknowledge a feeling of more than satisfaction at the general candour manifested on the occasion; for even the "silence" of the Sadducees was a tacit confession that they were worsted on the ground chosen by themselves. That was preferable to railing at One who, in the development of sacred truth, had left them speechless; and they might on the spot have given freedom to their passions, stung into virulence by their intellectual and Biblical defeat. They got their answer, and went home wiser if not better men.

While we would set merely a subordinate value on the impressions the argument produced, unless we could determine otherwise that they were just such impressions as ought to have been produced, let us elevate conspicuously into notice the fact that the reasoning of our Lord was understood, in its drift and bearing, at once by the assembly before Him. Had it been otherwise than simple and transparent, such would not have been the case. If, as He reasoned, they in a moment saw its superlative force, we surely may without difficulty arrive at the same discovery by an exercise of our faculties, assisted by an honest desire to perceive its cogency. It might be said to us, and not without a show of reason, judging by the number of the preceding pages, it does not seem just such an easy matter as you represent it to be. Of that we are fully conscious, and owe an apology to the reader for the long journey he has had to travel. But in consequence of errors manifold, which had first to be removed, our progress was slow, and the truth, the transcendent truth, was only reached by toilsome and critical steps. With that defence, we cast ourselves on the reader's forbearance.

How our Lord bore Himself in the Circumstances.

27. We have seen how the disinterested onlookers were impressed with the argument delivered in their hearing, and, from the silence of the champions of scepticism, we can imagine they were mortified at the

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failure of their attack. They left without a word. From them no confession of ignorance; no thanks for the instruction they had received. They came not with a sincere desire to be enlightened, and they retired embittered that the people had found out, in consequence of their own imprudence, how weak were the supports of their chosen dogma.

Now let us observe, with equal care, how the Christ bore Himself in the circumstances, and venture to determine what emotions would be supreme in His heart. It would appear to have been a silent parting on both sides. In commencing His reply, He had addressed a few words of gentle blame to His adversaries,—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God;" and when His demonstration was ended He closed His lips. Though they departed in an exasperated mood, He followed their retreat with no words of triumph, nor of obloquy at their persistent blindness. That was not His style with those who attempted to do Him wrong. He came to inform, not to insult; to reason, not to rail; to convince men, not to curse them for refusing His lessons. What was the sullen frown of His adversaries to Him who saw Calvary in the distance, and that not a long way off? Triumph! He was immeasurably above petty exultation, like every other selfish feeling, weak or strong. He had but a single object in entering into debate with His antagonists,—not to gather popularity around His name, only to win them as benighted perishing sinners to the hope and inheritance of eternal life. When they retired, unmoved except by hostility to His mission, we may be sure one deep feeling of pity pervaded His inmost being, a feeling identical with that which, on another occasion, found relief in tears, and in the sorrowful wail,—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not!"

Conclusion.

The task we undertook has been a labour of love, notwithstanding its difficulties, and would have been altogether pleasant but for one consideration which not unfrequently threw a shade over the inquiry that has engaged our thoughts. Will the reader listen to a few words accounting for this experience? Its cause was this: the necessity we were under, during the opening up of the Saviour's demonstration, to shake confidence in some ideas that so many have hitherto looked upon as sacred and beyond a doubt. That those we loved with so much affection are really asleep in the tomb, and not in the regions of endless day, appears a cold and forbidding doctrine, and, after the theological training the most of us have undergone, does signal violence at first to the finest sensibilities of our nature. From our youthful years, some of us have been intimately acquainted with a faith thus delivered:

"The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection."—(*Shorter Catechism, Question* 37.)

Tender associations have twined themselves around this phraseology, and it seems a thankless effort, not to wipe out those dear memories of parental love and watchfulness, for, perish what may, those recollections

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are enduring, but to scatter the visions of hope and celestial privilege which devout but mistaken builders had erected to cheer the broken heart and delight the imagination as it looked reverently and trustfully beyond the grave. Nay more, it almost wears the aspect of cruelty to shut heaven, as it were, on those who, amid the sorrows and conflicts of the Christian warfare, have been fondly expecting, at the hour of death, that its blessed gates would be held open by angel hands to receive them. This depressing feeling we had to contend with all along; and yet, O friend, is it not more profitable to have a right understanding of those solemn matters and to know where the "strong" and "everlasting consolation" abounds, than to be the sport of illusions, however dazzling, and refreshed by streams of comfort that do *not* issue from the throne of God and of the Lamb? The grand hope of the apostolic church was the recovery of being by a glorified resurrection at the Lord's return; and with the sainted Paul each lowly disciple may without a murmur wait God's time, when His promises are to be fulfilled; and in the meanwhile, as a beacon and heavenward attraction to the world drifting, drifting towards perdition, exclaim with a jubilant and thankful spirit,—"There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me (at death? no!) at THAT DAY; and not to me only, but unto all them also that LOVE HIS APPEARING" (2 Tim. iv. 8).

Finally, if through this feeble effort light has been shed on one of the most priceless records of the Sacred Volume, and if the Exposition, notwithstanding its manifold imperfections, may turn out a guide to any who eagerly desire to enjoy "the goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush," and "the certain hope" of a resurrection to "eternal life," that alone will infinitely requite the author for what labour and anxiety attended its production.

"THE MAN OF SIN."

HAVING on a former occasion offered, through the medium of your invaluable periodical, some remarks in support of the claim of a certain person to the sad pre-eminence awaiting the individual destined to assume, and carry out to its clearly-revealed issue, the *role* of the "Man of Sin," I would now, with your permission, revert to the subject, by briefly recapitulating the evidence I then adduced in favour of my position, and adding some particulars bearing on the question.

So far from its being (as some would persuade us) an attempt to be wise above what is written, to entertain at all, as admitting of even the possibility of a satisfactory reply, the inquiry, who is the "Man of Sin?" it is evident, from due consideration of the various aids furnished by the Word of God, as guides to the ascertainment of that point, that it is the Divine will that the identification of the individual so destined should be within the easy reach of the unprejudiced, honest, and faithful student of the "sure Word of prophecy."

The individuality, personality, and now nearly-approaching revelation of the "Man of Sin" being now much more generally than heretofore admitted by all who can properly be called students of that Word, I feel

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assured that an unprejudiced investigation of the evidence it supplies on the subject before us must lead to a more general reception thereof than has yet obtained.

Without further preface, then, I would refer in the first place to Rev. xvii. 8-11; the particulars of the description in which, as characteristic of the party intended, cannot, I conceive, by any possibility be fairly applied to any other individual that has ever existed, or can ever exist, than to him, to whom I feel assured, they all point, as agreeing, in all the particulars specified, with his most remarkable, world-wide, and well-known history—which is that of the late Napoleon I., Emperor of the French.

How, for example, could verses 10 and 11 be possibly applied to any other man who has ever lived? The angel, addressing John, states that the sixth form of Roman Government was then in actual existence: "Five are fallen, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue but a short space." Note here the minute correctness of the description given: "the other," not another; for the beast is represented as having but "seven heads;" and as six of the number had appeared, there remained, of course, but one to come.

The Emperorship having been the form then in existence, it necessarily constituted the sixth head. The five preceding ones had been as follows: Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunes. The Emperorship ceased on the abdication of the then Emperor, A.D. 1806, when Napoleon I. became the acknowledged seventh head, but with a different title; and fulfilled, so far, the prediction that it should "continue a short space;" he having occupied that position for nearly nine years, viz., from A.D. 1806, till A.D. 1815, when he was politically annihilated, so to say, at Waterloo.

But in ver. 11 we have mention, for the first time, of an eighth head! How comes this, seeing the beast has but seven altogether? Just in this way. The reappearance on earth of the seventh shall be, as it were, an eighth; that is, a *quasi* eighth, as we say. And that this is the real solution of the apparent inconsistency in the case, is plainly declared in the place before us, as follows: "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven."—εκ των ἑπτα, that is, one of the number; as if it were εις εκτων ἑπτα, one of the seven. How could Napoleon I. be more plainly designated? He would necessarily be one of the seven, having himself been the seventh; and to none of the previous six heads could possibly be applied, consistently with common sense, the language of the whole passage.

The phrase so much in use in works on prophecy, "the Septimo-Octave head," seems to admit and recognise the identity of the seventh and *quasi* eighth heads as different phases of the same individual. The past history, too, of Napoleon I., as that of one who was, in some measure, the terror of Europe, is such that it would be but natural that the world should "wonder" at seeing him again on earth, as we read in chap. xiii. ver. 3: "And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast." How exactly does this correspond with the case of Napoleon I. in his past history, and clearly predicted post-resurrection state!

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And now we come to the testimony of chap. ix. 11, wherein, if I do not altogether mistake the meaning of the place, the very name Napoleon is given as that of the "Man of Sin" in the statement, that in the Greek tongue he hath his name Apollyon (that is, the destroyer). The Greek term is Απολλύων, the present participle of the verb απολλυμι; and υ in Greek being represented by *y* in English, the name is properly given as Apollyon in the Bible. But there is another form of the verb, which is απολεω, the English rendering of which makes the participle απολεων; that is, within one letter of the name Napoleon; and it has been suggested that the wanting letter N may be taken as representing the Greek word ναι, which signifies verily, or truly,; so that prefixing it to the απολεων, we have the word Napoleon in full, and the meaning of it as follows: The true destroyer, or destroyer "with a vengeance," as it were; a title to which he will make good his right by carrying out the fearful *role* before him, under the direct control of Satan, whose agent he shall be.

As Josiah's name was announced 300 years before his birth, and Cyrus's 150 years before *his*, then it should not be thought wonderful that even the name of one destined to play so extraordinary a part in the approaching fearful drama, should also be foretold, as well as his character, actings, and end. The name, too, when put in the dedicatory form, which it would probably assume in any memorial to be erected in his honour, as well as in the predicted inscription on the foreheads of his worshippers—Ναπολεοντι—contains in its numeral letters the fatal number 666.

Again, in Jer. iv. 7, there is a passage wherein there is no difficulty in seeing that the "Man of Sin" is the subject; in which the name of Napoleon is necessarily implied as that of the destined occupant of that position. The words are: "The Lion is gone up from his thicket, and the destroyer, who is of the Gentiles, is on his way." Now in the Greek of the Septuagint, λεων represents "Lion," of course; and ναπος signifies "thicket;" so that here again we have the name Napoleon as that of the "Man of Sin," and a repetition of the title of "destroyer" accorded to him. And the bearing of the whole context in this instance is to the effect that the period spoken of is that of the winding up of the present Dispensation, and his connection therewith.

It is a curious coincidence, too, that while the Word of God predicts his resurrection from among the dead, in order to his assuming the *role* of "Man of Sin," a large proportion of the French peasantry are firmly persuaded that he has never died at all, but is hidden somewhere, till he shall suddenly appear at the head of two millions of men to subdue all the nations of Europe. They indignantly repudiate the suggestion even of the possibility of his having died. "He dead?" they say. "Impossible. They who say so don't know him. He is incapable of it," &c. Some incidents in his past life would suggest that he must have had a presentiment of his future destiny; as, for example, when he said, "I reserve for history a page of blood, such as its records do not yet contain." He once asked one of his courtiers what men thought of him, to which the reply was: "Some think you an angel, sire; some a demon, but all agree that you are more than a man." A prefect once addressing him, said: "God created Buonaparte, and rested from His labours."

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And we have M. Froue's statement, to the effect that he actually desired to be addressed by the title of "Votre providence!" Also that in the month of March, A.D. 1807, when he convoked the Jews at Paris, he was styled by them "the Lord's anointed Cyrus, the living image of the Divinity;" and that the ciphers of his name and that of Josephine were blended with the name of God, and inscribed on the Ark of the Covenant, surmounted with the Imperial Eagle.

On his reappearance on earth, he will enter into the predicted "seven years' covenant" with them, at the beginning of Daniel's seventieth week of years; and, after the lapse of three years and a half, in the middle of the week, break the covenant, openly assert his own godhead, and in that capacity claim universal homage, thus revealing himself as the "Man of Sin;" and, during those final three years and a half of the week in question, acting the fearful part assigned him in the "sure word of prophecy." It is a remarkable fact that there has been in existence for several years, and still continues, a sect established for the worship of Napoleon I. The number of its adherents is said to have greatly increased throughout all Europe. Their proceedings are conducted with the most profound secresy. Each member of the society possesses a picture representing him as reappearing, with a halo of glory around his head. A lady friend tells us that she has seen on the continent one of these pictures.

Ere long now shall he put forth his pretensions in all their blasphemous enormity, and then shall be seen, not a few here and a few there, as now to Romanism, but multitudes everywhere throughout the sphere of his then all but omnipotent power and influence, acknowledging his miracle-attested godhead, and preferring the worship of the "Man of Sin" to the only alternative within their reach—death. "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Spiritualism, as it is called (which is just diabolism under another but less repulsive and more attractive name), is evidently paving the way for his manifestation; so that when matters shall have so far progressed as to bring round the period of the open and undisguised assertion of his godhead, and the demand for universal recognition of his claim to divine honours and worship, the mere assertion of his divinity by the demons, Satan's agents, will suffice to secure the general admission of that claim, and the consequent worship of him by all not belonging to the class above excepted.

It is very foolish to deny, as so many do, the facts of Spiritualism, and affect to treat the whole thing as a delusion; which in this sense it certainly is not. Exaggerated as may be, and doubtless are, some of the accounts of it, as published, denied with truth the existence of the system cannot be, it having long since gone too far for that; so that such denial betrays inexcusable ignorance of what it is our duty to know, and the knowledge of which should keep us watchful, lest we become an easy prey, as we otherwise shall, to the devices of the enemy through its means. Just see the unmistakably plain and intelligible language of that peculiarly appropriate portion of the Word of God contained in 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12, on which it would be impossible to say anything making it plainer than it is, as it stands in the words of

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the apostle. I would merely remark, then, that for "a lie" in ver. 11, I would substitute "the lie," the definite article τῷ preceding ψεύδει in the original; the reference being, of course, to the lying assumption of godhead on the part of the "Man of Sin."

We have now unmistakably in our midst the immediate precursors of the "perilous times of the last days," so solemnly enjoined on our faithful remembrance by the apostle in 1 Tim. v. 4-9; the departure from the faith there foretold being now a matter of almost every-day occurrence in the numbers going over to Romanism. For my part, when I hear people express astonishment at such a state of things, I am equally astonished at their not expecting it, the Word of God being so plain and full on the subject. It must be so, and shall increase till it become fashionable; and then multitudes will go over, and with just the same facility, and in still greater numbers, to the worship of the "Man of Sin," in recognition of the miracles wrought in his presence and in his honour by the "false prophet."

May the Holy Spirit enable us to look into these things more seriously than we may have been in the habit of, that we may be thus prepared to resist the superhuman devices of the fearful character in question, so soon now to be revealed; and kept constantly observant of our Lord's caution, to "watch" for His own coming as the only means of bringing to its fore-ordained end the awful state of things that shall have preceded it. If, then, this be our desire, let us act consistently therewith, in not merely ourselves firmly holding the great truth of that coming and kingdom, but in using every proper effort within our reach to bring others to the knowledge of what we have found to be the best commentary—the Word of God—furnishing satisfactory solutions of most of the alleged difficulties of Scripture, which can generally be traced as to their certain source, to non-recognition of these very truths, which are so interwoven with the warp and woof of the whole texture of the Bible at large as to render it comparatively unintelligible when they are omitted. Yes; I hesitate not to say, from my own experience, that correct scriptural views of the nature, sense, and relative period of establishment of the coming "kingdom" would be by far the best commentary on the Word of God that has ever seen the light, or can ever be provided. Faith—not interpretation—is the demand of revelation; and when that is wanting, *quasi*-interpretations only tend to confuse and mislead, instead of throwing light on the Word.

Some may be ready to say with Peter, "If I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee," and to reject with indignation the suggestion of the mere possibility of their going over to the worship of the "Man of Sin," his miracles notwithstanding. But let us profit by Peter's experience. Had he been less self-confident he had probably held his ground, but he boasted, and fell! "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief," had been his better policy.

"Beware of Peter's words,
Nor confidently say.
I never will deny Thee, Lord;
But, Grant I never may."

J. CONYNGHAM MCCAUSLAND.

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EARTH'S BRIDAL DRESS.

WHEN morning spreads her robe of light,
Or noontide sheds its splendours bright,
Or dusky evening veils the air;
When gently fall the moonbeams clear,
Or radiant all, the stars appear,
E'en now this earth is bright and fair.

Though saddened eyes look up to heaven,
And piercing cries from hearts sore riven,
And weary voices fill the air;
Though sin profanes the Father's gifts,
And o'er its plains her head uplifts,
E'en now this earth is bright and fair.

Framed by His breath whose name is Love,
The earth beneath, the heavens above,
What can they be but bright and fair?
They wait the day when all shall own,
In dread array Him on the throne,
Who is of all things Lord and Heir.

Filled with that light, the moon and sun
With seven-fold glow their course shall run;
The mountains shout, the vales prolong,
And hills give out the voice of song,
To see the King of Righteousness;
The floods shall then lift up their voice,
Each wood and glen and cave rejoice;
With blossoms bowers shall laugh, the while
The fields with flowers responsive smile,
For earth is in her bridal dress. G. J. v. S.

HOW TO READ THE SCRIPTURES; AND THE VALUE OF UNDERSTANDING THEM TO MEAN WHAT THEY SAY.*

TO all those who are satisfied that the Bible is entitled to be considered as what it professes to be—the Word of God—there are several

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* Address to South Side Branch of Young Men's Christian Association, Glasgow.

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weighty considerations which must naturally arise in their minds, demanding immediate and earnest attention.

Foremost amongst these would be—What is its purpose? and have I any interest in it?

When a message comes from one so great as the only living and true God, the Creator and Upholder of all things, we cannot fail to have an interest in it; everything which emanates from Him, whether it be directly intended for our use or not, must be worthy of consideration, and capable of teaching us some lessons. But it is the nature of the Bible, that, though given in revelation to individuals at different times of the world's history, yet it has an intense personal interest for each human being, because it is God's message to each individual of the way of life. "Search the Scriptures," said Jesus, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Its purpose therefore is to tell men of something which interests them; of a way of salvation from sin, and misery, and death. Moreover, the whole Scriptures, although various in style of composition, and of different dates, yet are united in declaring the same message, and are in complete harmony with one another. It may be laid down as a rule for our guidance in their study, that they cannot contradict themselves. We may find some apparent contradictions, or come across some parts difficult of explanation, but let us rather incline to believe that it is our deficiency of knowledge alone which causes the difficulty, and that in due time, if we wait patiently, the entire unity of God's Word will be established and its beauty made manifest.

Other questions arise, however, such as:—Has God spoken in language intelligible to us? If not, has He given us a key to open its hidden meaning, that we may understand? Failing such a key, how are we to understand and benefit by His Word? These are all questions of the very highest importancer, equiring us to be satisfied in our own minds as to the real state of the case. We might proceed to read the Book without first deciding these questions; but if the reading of the Book did not decide them for us, and we were left in doubt as to what it did actually mean, what benefit could we have derived from the reading?

Let us address ourselves to these points in particular, and I would fain hope with the result of being drawn more closely together in mind and purpose.

Has God spoken in language intelligible to us? This question would be answered by every Protestant in the affirmative; and yet their action often seems to me to belie their verbal confession. We all know that the poor Roman Catholic is denied the privilege of reading his Bible for himself, because the church, or the Pope and his priests, have ruled that it cannot be understood except as interpreted by them in their language. Although every Protestant rejoices in his open Bible, and unmolested right to study it, yet he is also, to some extent, under the same servitude, for his thoughts are trammelled by the interpretations which his Theologian-priest puts upon the words of the Bible. The whole system of Christendom at the present day nurtures the idea that *because* the Bible is the Word of God, it cannot be understood by common people or by ordinary modes of study; and this idea I conceive to have a very mischievous tendency. It is good to have a feeling of reverence for God's Word, but when that feeling degenerates into superstition,

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evil is the result. Too many reverence their Bible in blind superstition that it is somehow good for them to possess the Book, and they little trouble themselves to find out what it has to say, beyond quarrying for an isolated solacing text now and again. It is a pity that it should be so. The Bible is no amulet to be hung about our necks, or kept in our houses, to fend us from evils; nor is it a mere quarry for seeking out detached bits, wherewith to suit the habits and circumstances of our minds. It is a book which calls for our study, appeals to our common sense, and invites our judgment; whilst it must be considered as a whole.

Let us consider for a moment the circumstances of the case, and we shall see how reasonable it is to suppose that the Bible is written in language within our easy comprehension.

The Pentateuch, for example, contains the Law which God gave to the Children of Israel through Moses. The language of that Law is of the most explicit nature, and we never read that it was any part of the duty of the priests to explain the hidden meanings thereof. It was explicit enough in itself, and had God required His people to observe a law, the language of which they could not of themselves understand, He was laying upon them an exceedingly grievous burden, considering the penalties which were attached to disobedience. Even the duty of Moses, who gave the Law, was thereafter confined, we may say, to its administration; for there is no other law extant which admits of less dubiety as to its decrees, or gives less room for legal quibbling as to the meaning of words and phrases.

Let us consider again for what purpose the Bible has been given to the world. It was not to offer salvation to a particular class or grade of society, for the invitation is:—"Ho, *every one* that thirsteth,"—and who does not thirst? "Come unto me, *all* ye that labour,"—and who does not labour? Neither was it given forth for the ears of the learned only. The Law was spoken for the ears of *all* the congregation. Much of the Bible is historical, and intelligible to the weakest understanding. Most, if not all, of the prophecies were given either as warnings of evil, or incentives to good by promises of blessing, or both combined, for *the people*. We have the sayings and doings of Jesus recorded. To whom did He address Himself, and for whose sakes did He give Himself up to the death? Was it to the learned alone, or for the self-satisfied Pharisee, or the rich? Nay; "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He declared His message was to preach the Gospel to *the poor*. Lastly, does not the Apostle Paul say (1 Cor. i. 19-31) that this preaching was foolishness in the eyes of the *wise* of this world? That "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

What do all these considerations lead us to think, but that the Word of God is meant for whoever will receive it, and is couched in such language that we can understand it for ourselves. If any of us have been harbouring the thought that God is too great and exalted to speak to us in simple, ordinary language, let us lay aside the idea. Let us not suppose that God would give His people a revelation which would

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be no revelation at all, if not brought within the understanding of every one; but let us rather think of His goodness and mercy in condescending to the level of our understanding and making Himself and His purposes known to us.

It is not without good reason that I have dwelt on this point of the Bible being written in language for our comprehension. Many are prevented from giving the Book that attention which it deserves and calls for, just because they entertain the opinion that it is beyond their reach, and requires some theological training before it can be explained. Let us pause for a moment and look around us on the growing strife and confusion upon matters of religion. The Roman Catholic claims that the key of interpretation to the Bible is in the keeping of his Church. The Swedenborgian claims that the key of interpretation was given to Emanuel Swedenborg, and so we must understand the Word as explained by him and his followers; and so each church has its own system of interpretation. Each takes the Bible professedly as its guide, and yet the conclusions arrived at are sometimes wide as the poles asunder. One who is little informed regarding the real contents of the Book, might well gaze on in perfect amazement, and ask himself the question—"If so many opinions are held, so widely different in some cases, and all founded on the writings of the Bible, how can it be possible for me to to know what to make of them?" I can, in the circumstances, somewhat sympathise with the feelings of such an one, the result of which is that he decides it would be nothing but vexation to try and find out the meaning of the Bible for himself, and so contents himself to believe only what he is taught, or what suits him, or nothing at all.

Why should this be so? Why should we consider that the Bible teaches its doctrines so obscurely as to cause all this confusion? Has God placed the key of interpretation in the hands of any individual, or set of individuals? If so, let them show their credentials; until that is done we shall be unanimous in rejecting the idea.

The fault is exclusively man's, as it is bound to be. Man looks for interpretation somewhere, when no interpretation is required. All that is required is, that he should take the book into his hands and *read*: if he understands not at all at first let him read again, and again, and again, and light will dawn upon his efforts, for the Bible is its own best interpreter. I am far from saying that we should not accept the aid which other writings may give us in the study of the Bible, but the latter must be supreme, and the others subservient to it. We must reverse the too common order of procedure, which is to form one's ideas first from extraneous sources, and then go to the Bible to have them confirmed. This mode does not show true reverence for its teaching and authority. The reverent student of the Bible takes it up untrammelled by prejudice, and asks God for light; he suffers himself to be guided by His Word, and does not seek to turn its plain teaching aside for something which better (apparently) suits his training or the bent of his mind. This is the true way to search after truth. Archbishop Whately makes some very sound remarks, when he says:—"It is one thing to *wish to have truth on our side*, and another thing to wish sincerely to be *on the side of truth*. There is no genuine love of truth implied in the

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former. Truth is a powerful auxiliary, such as every one wishes to have on his side; every one is rejoiced to find, and therefore seldom fails to find that the principles he is disposed to adopt,—the notions he is inclined to defend,—may be maintained as true. A determination to *obey* the truth, and to follow wherever she may lead, is not so common. In this consists the genuine love of truth; and this can be realised in practice, only by *postponing* all other questions to that which ought to come foremost,—'What is truth?'"

So far it will be gathered that I am in favour of reading the Bible literally; i.e., reading under the ordinary laws of the meaning of language. I claim that this is the only safe way of arriving at the mind of God. If any one says that I am merely choosing one way of interpretation, let me remind him that of all the systems of interpretation which are current, and by which words are made to bear a different meaning from the ordinary or original acceptation, there is nothing to stamp them with Divine authority. If one man takes a passage of Scripture and says it means so and so, and another says the same passage means something different, which am I to believe? Unless God gives me another revelation to say which has the proper mode of interpretation, I can accept neither. For my own part, I disclaim the word interpretation as applicable to the course I advocate. Let us treat the Bible as we would another book. We have all received an education in our mother tongue; we know the natural meaning of words and phrases, and when we take up a book to read, we understand the author to use words in their ordinary sense. If he himself informs us in his book that such is not the case, but that he must be understood in some particular sense,—good and well; we are not then misled. Is there any good reason why we should not treat the Bible after the same fashion? Has God told us in that Book that His language must be understood in some sense different from the ordinary? I venture to say, no. Further, I venture to say that had God intended it to be so, He would Himself have given us the keys required to unlock the treasures of His Word, and not have left men to grope about in darkness, using false keys, and deceiving themselves.

"But," suggests some one, "do you mean to say that the Bible does not contain any figurative language?" Certainly not. When we read a book literally, we read its figures literally as well; i.e., we take the palpable meaning which they convey. We read our newspapers literally, and yet they abound in figurative language. Figurative language may be said to be the applying of words to an object apart from their ordinary use, and the use of it is to make more vivid the picture drawn. Even so must we read the Bible, which abounds in figures. Thus, for example, when Jesus tells His disciples,—"Ye are the *salt* of the earth,"—we have no difficulty in understanding that He is using figurative language, and His meaning is thereby conveyed in a more pithy way. I must here remark that much of what passes nowadays for figurative language is not truly so. I refer to that habit which is so common amongst religious teachers, and known as putting a spiritual meaning on the words of the Bible, as if the words of God required to be spiritualized! or could be spiritualized by men! This process, instead of being pithy or lofty, is rather weak and puerile. The weakness of this style was well exposed in the RAINBOW for 1879, p. 312.

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Let me now allude more fully to another current and injurious failing in the treatment of God's Word, on which I have already touched, viz., the habit of detaching verses, clauses, or even the part of a sentence, and making them bear a meaning apart from their context. In this way any doctrine might be produced from the Bible. "There is no God," are words in Scripture; but they are the quoted words of the fool, and the context does not sanction the statement. There may be much of this practice which is harmless, where a few words are chosen for the text of a sermon inculcating good morality, or teaching some good lessons altogether independent of the context; or even of the text, which often has but the faintest connection with the discourse itself. The discourse may have been good, but let it not be supposed that such is a proper exposition of Scripture. There are times, however, when this habit of carving out texts to suit occasions, and building thereon theories, is mischievous in the extreme, because false.

Perhaps we shall nowhere find this better exemplified than in discourses over the dead, when the speaker is trying to comfort the mourners regarding their deceased friend. For example, have we not heard the words of Genesis regarding Enoch,—"He was not, because God took him,"—applied to men who had just died? Now what does the context of these words teach us? They occur in a chapter which has been called the world's first death-roll. Adam died, Seth died, Enos died, Cainan died, Mahalaleel died, Jared died, but when it comes to Enoch, of him the Scriptures say, "he . . *not*, for God took him." Our translators have supplied "was," although I think "died" would have been the better word—"Enoch died not, for God took him." The context shows this to be the meaning. What a travesty of Scripture it is therefore to apply these words to anyone who has just died! By this the exception is made the rule! Enoch, who died not, and these good persons who die are placed on the same footing now! If this be true, it should be proved from other sources, and by all means abstain from thus making void the words of Scripture.

In like manner the words of the angel regarding Jesus, after His bodily resurrection from the grave,—"He is not here, He is risen,"—have been used as applicable to the condition of good men who have died. Is it really thus that men indiscriminately treat the words of the Bible? Alas, yes! And can there be anything more suggestive of something wrong in their beliefs, that they should thus be forced, or led, it may be involuntarily, so to misapply its teaching? Jesus Christ, who has conquered death and been raised to the right hand of God, far above all principalities and powers; and men who have died, fallen under the power of death, and are waiting for a deliverance from its icy hand, are in effect placed on the same footing! The language used to describe the risen state of the One, is supposed to be applicable to the condition of the other! I protest with all my soul against such a method of altering the meaning of Scripture language; and again, I say, if the idea wished to be established be true, surely some more direct and honest method of doing it might be found in the language of Scripture.

Lest anyone should have received the impression that I consider the Bible altogether an easy Book to understand in its entirety, I may say that, in common with all who have given it their consideration, I have

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found difficulties, some of which have been in their time satisfactorily, to my mind, cleared away, whilst others remain waiting explanation. The Book requires study, and will be found to repay well all the attention given to it; its stores of knowledge and wisdom are inexhaustible. But I do affirm that the plain and unmistakable teaching of the Bible is abundant, and in complete harmony throughout; whilst the less plain, and sometimes obscure passages, must be made subservient to the overwhelming testimony of the plain passages.

I have not set myself in this address to say what the main teaching of Scripture is on the great question of man's destiny, or the means of his salvation; but I would further make some few remarks upon the value of taking the course which I recommend.

I have pled for a literal reading of the Bible, as we would read another book, treating it (reverently) according to the laws of language. The values of this method are many.

1st. We have thus a sure means of ascertaining the mind and purpose of God, because unless we take the ordinary course pursued of finding out a man's thoughts, viz., by reading his language literally, there is no other method revealed to us by God, for the understanding of His Word. We may speculate and try to build up a system of interpretation for ourselves, but all such efforts are human and vain: whilst by reading the language literally we are proceeding on the safe ground of universal custom, which is, at the same time, just using the Divine gift which God has bestowed upon us of communicating with one another.

2nd. By reading the Bible literally we shall get the most harmonious teaching throughout. I speak my own experience, and I trust it is, or shall be yours also. I am addressing Bible students; I earnestly ask you to cast aside prejudices, and read the Book free from any preconceived ideas. If you will excuse personal reference, I may say there was a time when the Bible was a dark book to me. I was strictly trained to believe that the Bible taught certain doctrines, which thousands believe; but when I went to the Book itself, I could make little harmony of it. I could enjoy a book, or a chapter here and there, for its history, or its poetry, or its moral precepts; but of its Divine harmony I knew nothing. Believe me, when I say that in the Providence of God, for I consider it so, I was led to adopt the course I now advocate, the Bible became a new book to me, and I have ever since prized it. I am satisfied that in no other way will such safe, satisfactory, and harmonious conclusions be arrived at.

3rd. The supreme value lies in the fact that this method leads us to find out what is truth, and what is error. It tells us what is the real way of salvation; and if we neglect to search it out and to follow it, is there hope of our participating in the promises of God? He has just revealed *one* method of salvation, and it will not do to say with some that it matters not what we believe, so long as we love the Lord, and our neighbour as ourself. If we shut ourselves out from a knowledge of the things which God has revealed for our belief, by refusing to find them out, such culpable negligence cannot but weigh against us in the great day when Jesus Christ shall come to reveal the secrets of men's hearts. Our own beliefs, however pure and lofty, will not save us, if not in accordance with what God has revealed. Let us, therefore, follow the advice

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of our Lord, to "Search the Scriptures" from love of them; and my earnest wish is that we may all be guided into truth, and be found amongst that throng who have waited with patience for their Lord, and shall greet Him with joy when He appears.

R. K. STRANG.

OUR FATHER'S WORD.

"Thou art my hiding-place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."

LIKE to the dew of morn on the grass,
Glist'ning and sparkling as gems of life;
Like stars which shine as the thoughts of God,
Or di'monds set in the floor of heaven,
So, Father mine, are Thy words to me;
They urge me rise from care so trying,
From doubts and fears, from envy and strife,
From mists and myths, from creeds so barren,
From heathen grafts and papal dogma,
Away to the nations' healing streams,
Which gladden the New Jerusalem;
Away to the Light ineffable,
Away to the Life adorable—
To Jesus, my soul's beloved One!
O Master dear! so far, yet so near;
Why tarriest Thou Thy chariot wheels?
Come, Thou Desire of all the nations!
Oh, come, Thou long expected Shiloh,
To dwell with men on the earth again;
And thus all Thy prophets' lore fulfil,
And Israel's kingdom again restore!
O blissful Milliad—happy age!
No more anguish, no more scalding tears,
No more partings, no more scathing words,
But songs of deliverance, deep intoned,
And Jesus for ever all in all!

FRANCIS DRAKE.

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"THE BIBLICAL MUSEUM."*

MR. ELLIOT STOCK occupies a position of honour among the great London publishers. His business grows apace, and we congratulate him and the laborious compiler, Mr. JAMES COMPER GRAY, on the completion of this great work. We have frequently referred to the "Biblical Museum" in its progress towards the desired goal; and now that the desire is gratified, at the expense of enormous reading and writing on the part of the compiler, and a large amount of money on that of the publisher, we are entitled to ask a question which has sometimes presented itself to us: Do Christian people think of their obligation to Christian *publishers?* We emphasise publishers, because the gratification derived from a good book could not have reached the mind of the reader without the help of the publisher. An author may weave out of his brain thoughts of priceless value, glowing with the beauty of sanctified intellect; but how is he to reach the public if the "risk" is not taken by another? The hazard of loss is bravely faced by the publishers of Christian books, for which they get small thanks, as the reader seldom thinks about it.

But the "Biblical Museum," costly as it is, is cheap at the market price of 5s. a volume; and we believe both editor and publisher will find their reward in a large demand to enrich and adorn the libraries of "ministers, Bible students, and Sunday School teachers," for whom, Mr. Gray tells us, it is "especially designed." The work consists of fifteen volumes, ten embracing the Old Testament, and five the New. The volumes are uniform in size, handsomely bound, lettered, with gilt tops. The work contains about 5,700 pages. The marginal notes are exceedingly numerous (21,000), and contain much valuable reading, in illustration of the text. The comments are selected with great care. Mr. Gray has laid all ages and all schools under contribution in furnishing his "Museum;" and a wonderful gathering it is! It is a library of ancient and modern theology; and, whilst the reader must, of course, exercise his judgment on the doctrinal value of the quotations, for which the authors only are responsible, we can assure him that he will find multitudes of passages of beauty and excellence. The illustrative anecdotes, apothegms, and parables are about 12,000 in number; there are also some 12,000 outlines of sermons by preachers of all countries and churches. There are archæological notes, and the etymology of old Bible words. There are 36,000 Scripture references explanatory of the Sacred text. Each book of the New Testament is prefaced by a condensed Introduction, giving some account of its author, date, credibility, and characteristics, and synopses of its contents. And 6,000 authors are quoted and referred to as providing help in the path of light and truth. We hope many gentlemen, or ladies, will present copies of

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* The Biblical Museum: A Collection of Notes Explanatory, Homiletic, and Illustrative, on the Holy Scriptures; especially designed for the use of Ministers, Bible Students, and Sunday School Teachers. By James Comper Gray, Author of "Topics for Teachers," "The Class and the Desk," &c., &c. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row, E.C.

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this valuable work to pastors of limited means. Nor should generous donors of books overlook the great practical use of the "Biblical Museum" to such workers in rough fields as our devoted City Missionaries.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THEOLOGICAL CONSISTENCY.

SIR,—As a business man it is seldom I find time to read theological works, but I have lately read Dr. Bonar's "Prophetical Landmarks," and "The Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ;" and I am tempted to ask how it is that, with his "canon of criticism," the author believes in man's natural immortality, and the eternity of future torments. Not only does he do this, however, but he speaks very disparagingly of those who do not; and he brings against them the serious charge of arriving at their conclusions "*by setting aside the literal sense.*" But is the Doctor prepared to sustain this charge against such representative men as write in the RAINBOW? Nay: would he be able to rebut a similar charge, if retorted? as it certainly might be by such believers in "conditional immortality." Would it not turn out that it is Dr. Bonar himself who "sets aside the literal sense" by adopting those anagogical exegeses of which he has often expressed such strong disapproval? Now, kindly note, in the first place, that the Doctor's scriptural hermeneutics are thus defined: "Literal, if possible." "The literal is the rule, the figurative the exception; and, before the exception can be admitted, good reason must be shown," &c. He approvingly quotes Hooker's familiar dictum and several others like it. He complains also, in every variety of form, if his opponents' "conclusiveness" is derived from "general conclusions from systems and doctrines" rather than from "the words themselves." He argues from first to last that the proper grammatical sense is, *prima facie*, the true sense; and remarks that, "from the days of Origen and Jerome, the literal sense has been the foundation of orthodoxy, and the allegorical the reverse;" and yet he holds a doctrine which can only be defended (as Mr. White forcibly puts it) on the supposition "that the main current of the Redeemer's language, on the very object of His mission, is to be taken as a stream of metaphors." Refuting those who are so ready to see a figure in everything, the Doctor points out that the sacred writers could and did express themselves in "natural and precise language;" and that they only deviated from this style when special necessity arose. And where, I ask, should we expect to find this natural language but in the gospels? and, if the Doctor, while sticking to his principles, can harmonise his views with the Gospel of St. John, &c., then we should be greatly obliged if some sound millenarian would kindly tell us how. Why does he not respect the grammatical sense of such terms as life, death, perish,

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live for ever, &c.? Is his canon to be laid aside when the anti-millenarians are disposed of? And is he to borrow their weapons with which to fight some other antagonist? If not, how is he, and those who think with him, to defend their position? As you so often point out, the penalty of sin is "death;" and, Christ came that "we might not perish, but have everlasting life." It is those who sow to the Spirit only who are to have "honour, immortality, and eternal life." "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever;" but the unsaved are to be "blotted out of the book of life," "destroyed," "body and soul in hell." It is the redeemed who "shall not see death," who "are to live for ever;" "neither shall they die any more;" but the rest will die again, die the "second death." Why ignore the literal sense of the vast majority of Scripture utterances on this subject? Strange it is, indeed, to see one who has striven so laudably to show that the literal sense is presumptively the true sense, touching with a spiritualising wand hosts of passages, "changing the meaning of words as alchemy does, or would, the substance of metals," for no reason on earth but to make them harmonise with a certain "system or doctrine." If a belief in eternal life only in Christ necessitated this kind of manœuvring, I would reject it at once. My object, however, is, not to advocate any particular doctrine, but to show that, whatever others may, or may not do, Dr. Bonar and his friends "make void *their* hermeneutics," that *they* "set aside the literal sense," not merely of a few doubtful passages, but of the vast majority of the plainest Scripture declarations on the subject referred to.

Drs. Brown and Bonar were fond of bandying charges of not going through with their principle of interpretation, but where is there a more startling instance of this than on Dr. Bonar's part in the case now under consideration? I can illustrate his position, and the position of his millenarian brethren generally by one fairly representative example. One of the stock arguments by which they endeavour to prove that the two resurrections, mentioned in Rev. xx., are of the same kind, is that they could not otherwise stand related to each other, as first and second. I think it is Mr. Birks who says: "The first Punic war" implies another war of the same kind; so with the "first resurrection." And Dr. Bonar quotes even Moses Stuart to the same effect, though he says, "he would fain have driven his system through it if he could." Now, why don't millenarians so reason about the first and second death? Any argument that can be drawn from the laws of philology in the one case are equally applicable to the other, for the point of antithesis is precisely the same.

Again, Dr. Bonar reminds us that literal explanations are often added to the symbols of the apocalypse, and that the explanations cannot be figurative or "they would not be explanations at all, but the opposite." Thus the "seven candlesticks" are explained as the "seven churches;" "seven lamps," "seven spirits;" "golden vial," "prayers of saints;" "seven heads," "seven hills;" "fine linen," "righteousness of saints;" "they lived and reigned," "this is the first resurrection." This is the Spirit's explanation. The conclusion suggested, they say, is irresistible. Quite so; but is it not equally conclusive when they come to the symbolic act of casting

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into the lake of fire and add, "This is the second death?" We might pursue the matter much farther but must forbear. My contention is that to hold and defend the doctrine of man's natural immortality millenarians must violate the very principles of interpretation they themselves propound, that they are guilty of that very caprice they denounce in others, and that they are compelled to abandon "the literal interpretation of Scripture upon which the millenarian theory is based."

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

ALFRED PONTIFEX.

Portobello, Midlothian.

JUDAH'S SCEPTRE.

DEAR SIR,—In reading your very admirable paper on "The Divine Side of the Question," I feel prompted to ask space for a question about one incidental statement in it. On page 424 you say that, "The sceptre had departed from Judah and a lawgiver from between his feet when the Shiloh came, so that when rejected by the Jews he died a Roman death." Your reference is, of course, to Jacob's prophecy of Judah's destiny, as recorded in Gen. xlix. 10; and I think it is clear that you understand the departure of the sceptre to mean the loss of national independence, and the subjugation to a foreign yoke. But I am at a loss to see how, in that case, the prophecy had a fulfilment. The nation's independence had certainly been lost some time before the Shiloh came; but the prophecy declared, on the other hand, that "the sceptre *shall not depart* from Judah . . . until Shiloh come."

To those who understand the sceptre to refer to the *royal* authority of the house of David, this has always been a difficulty. But if the "sceptre" (שבט *rod, staff, tribe*, as well as *sceptre*) refer to the *tribal* staff, as suggested by Parkhurst, Bishop Newton, and others, then the prediction had a very remarkable fulfilment. While the other tribes had been long since broken up and scattered, Judah, in spite of all her calamities and losses, still remained a distinct "body politic," with tribal authority over her own people. It was only after they rejected the Messiah that they were rooted up, and "the whole remnant of them scattered into all the winds."

Perhaps, however, you may have some other way of looking at the passage, which may be of service to your readers to have laid before them.—Yours sincerely,

M. W. STRANG.

Glasgow.

HID, NOT LOST.

SIR,—Long ages ago a fern-leaf grew in a deep valley. No eye ever saw its beauty, and it fell at last into the earth, sank away, and was lost. Surely no record ever was made of its life and story. But the other day a man of science, with hammer in hand, was peering into the mysteries of nature, and, on his breaking a rock, there lay, in perfect outline, the whole delicate tracery of the little fern-leaf. After lying thousands of years in the darkness, lost and forgotten, it came forth to be looked at by admiring eyes. In like manner obscure lives drop away and are forgotten; but in like manner also will they reappear. No smallest deed done for Christ shall be forgotten.—Yours faithfully,

THOMSON SHARP.

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LITERATURE.

The Constitution of Comprehensionism; or, The Guide for the Right. Drafted by F. G. Wilson, the Radiationist of the Blue Transept of the Paradision of Comprehension. London: H. Cattell & Co.

Why this piece of profane secularism has been sent to us, we do not know; but as it is on our table, we shall say a word about it. "The Radiationist of the Blue Transept"—whatever that may mean—has constituted himself into a "University" (!) and is going to "effect a moral revolution throughout the whole world;" that is, if a sufficient number of other "Universities" join him. We are to have a new religion, vastly superior to that which we possess at present," Comprehensionism" instead of the Gospel. All creeds, churches, sects, are to disappear before our luminous "Radiationist," and the world is to be happy at last. But as we pity the writer, we shall only add, for his information, that men accustomed to the sublime truths of Christianity will not exchange them for the pedantic jargon of infidelity.

Lights and Shadows of Ancient Mythology, Language, and History; or, Odin's Runa of Yggdrasil. By Elisabeth Wilson. London: S. W. Partridge & Co.

We expected much from this volume, as we know something of the fine enthusiasm with which Miss Wilson pursues the studies of her honoured father; but we have found much more than we expected. She has really surprised us; and, whilst we appreciate highly the learning and research of this accomplished lady, we must express our admiration of the way by which she clothes with life and beauty the relics of pre-historic antiquity. The advocates of our Israelitish origin have in this fascinating book a magazine of arguments. Talk of romance! It must not be named on the same day with "Odin's Runa of Yggdrasil!" The light which this volume throws on many obscure passages of Scripture is wonderful; and if that were its only merit, which is far enough from being the case, it ought at once to secure a host of readers.

Pauline Theology, by H. L. Hastings, of Boston, has been issued by the "Conditional Immortality Association," price one shilling. London: F. Southwell, 19, Paternoster Row.

This admirable little book proves that the Apostle of the Gentiles knows nothing of the awful doctrine of eternal sin and woe. But, as a matter of fact, that doctrine is not in the Bible at all, as the rapidly growing numbers of Christians know, and as all *might* know if they would search for themselves without prejudice. Blessed be God, this hideous lie of centuries is at last detected and put to shame! But we must labour still, with all fidelity, to chase it out of Christendom!

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NOTICES.

MR. ELLIOT STOCK has published the New Testament in French, illustrated, at the astonishing price of one penny, in paper covers; three pence in cloth. We hope it will have a large circulation in France.

"S. D. B." The author you name did wisely in avoiding the Bible when writing his book to prove the immortality of the soul; for he would have had small help in that quarter. "He wished to be independent of the Scriptures." Exactly!

"H." We need not tell an educated man that the authorities are divided regarding the doxology. The Revisers have gone with the majority. But we need not lose the precious words, for they are certainly Scriptural, whether our Lord added them to the model prayer or not. You are rather hard on the Revisers, and no good purpose could be attained by the publication of your paper. We could not use your remarks concerning a contemporary, because we think complaints should be sent only to the party complained of. He may have a satisfactory answer which no one else could give.

"J. C." writes: "Would it not be well if Mr. Holding would now put into about fifty words—or say, into a 'nutshell'—what he thinks about the matter he has treated at such length?" Perhaps Mr. Holding will notice this and give us a synopsis, without comment, of his reasons for believing that the Syriac was the original of the New Testament. We will give him a page for this purpose, instead of our correspondent's "fifty words."

"A LADY" who cannot profit by the pulpit, as she is hard of hearing, expresses her grateful thanks for the valuable teaching of the RAINBOW.

"YORKS." I think of Bradford with pleasure, having met some true men and women there, fine specimens of clear heads and warm hearts. I hope you are right in believing that the circulation of the "Rainbow Tracts" will do good; but I am much out of pocket by them, and unable, therefore, to add to their number.

"Aquila." I will tell you a little story about "published by request." Many years ago I delivered a lecture; subject and place need not be mentioned. Its publication was unanimously voted, one enthusiastic gentleman shouting, "Both hands!" I took comfort from this in relation to the cost of printing, as I knew him to be a man of independent means. When the lecture was printed, he took—*one* copy, price *fourpence!*

A CLERGYMAN writes: "I have read with *much* pleasure your paper on 'The Divine Side of the Question.' It *could not* be better! Did I think this would endanger your humility, I would not say so; but I think you are proof against *that*." Oh, quite; thank you!

"H. D." says: "Your three recent articles, two on 'The King,' and one on 'The Divine Side of the Question,' I read with special interest. They are simply *very grand*. May the mighty God of Jacob make you strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, to prosecute the grand work! It is pleasing and gratifying to know that the Light and the Truth are extending so rapidly."

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THE RAINBOW:

A Magazine of Christian Literature, with Special Reference to the Revealed Future of the Church and the World.

DECEMBER, 1881.

EBENEZER!

HOW much there is sometimes in a single word! "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." As truly as did the illustrious Samuel, we use these words. This number closes the eighteenth volume of the RAINBOW. It is the Lord's doing, and He shall have all the praise, with overflowing gratitude. We *meant* to labour for Him, to try to clear some portions of His truth from the entanglements of superstition, tradition, paganism, and false philosophy. We knew that we should acquire neither wealth nor popularity on this field. We counted the cost and made our choice with right good will, as it is better to be on the side of unpopular truth than on that of error in purple and fine linen; better, because the consciousness of fighting for the right sustains amidst the privations and hardships of the battlefield; and better, because the great "Leader and Commander" in this warfare is so divinely strong in His cause as to be sure of victory, and so wonderfully generous as to think of the humblest private in His army.

We need not remind our friends and fellow-labourers that to promote a *doctrinal reformation* is the hardest task under the sun. Political and social reforms require energy, perseverance, and money to realise them. It usually takes many years to remove from the statute book of these realms a law whose workings experience has found inimical to the commonweal, notwithstanding the obvious fact that, in political and social matters, there is nothing specially holy to prevent men doing what, on mature consideration, they think best for the general interests of the community. But when you come to the religious region, and suggest that, after reverent examination, as becomes the subject of study, you are obliged to conclude that there are dogmas in it which never came from God, you instantly create suspicion, doubt, dislike. The reason of this is perfectly clear. It does not require a moment's investigation. You have touched sacred ground, where even examination seems presumptuous. Early training, catechism,

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creed, pulpit, and religious book, all rise up against you—a phalanx of guardians of the ecclesiastical citadel, every stone of which is supposed to be holy. You must respect the sentiment, whatever you may think of the wisdom which, without question, venerates everything which is thought to come from God.

Of course it is legitimate to criticise the indolence that will not "try the spirits whether they are of God," which takes everything for granted, and assents to propositions which are palpably false; but, recollecting that you yourself once dwelt in that same region of unquestioning credulity, charity whispers in your ear not to criticise too keenly the brother you have left behind in your march Sunward.

Well, it is right to listen to this whisper; but it cannot be right to conceal a glorious truth with which the MASTER has honoured you, lest its brilliance should pain the eyes of men who have lived hitherto in a theological fog, or in that "dim religious light" which suits the vision of sentimental people, but is simply irrational to the man of robust faith who goes forward vigorously to ascend the Mount of God. Yet in the case of those who wish to preserve *every* thing that is nominally religious, lest you should touch *any* thing that is really so, we must be at once courteous, tender, and faithful. If asked how are we to combine these attributes, the answer is not so difficult as at first it may appear. The law of the case is clear: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose," from whatever motive.

This is the law, in loyalty to which we have acted all these years. But we claim no credit in this; for, setting aside for the moment its divine wisdom, it commends itself to our intelligence as the best "policy." The fierce polemics of the past, when good men vilified each other with opprobrious epithets, are, we hope, past for ever. Their malign adjectives were greatly owing to the cruel parts of their creed. They served God bitterly, imagining that the keenness of their invectives vouched for the truth of their theology. We are thankful that this mode of theological warfare is out of date among all who have any claim to the distinction of Christian gentlemen; and we are certain that truth loses none of its moral force by coming clothed in a "still small voice," instead of that of earthquake or fire. We make no reflection on the memory of our noble fathers; on the contrary, we honour them highly as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; to whose fidelity we owe much, although it was sometimes shown in a fashion which it would be unpardonable in us to copy. Truth has not changed, and cannot change; but it is a delightful fact that the more she is left to the quiet operation of her own dew-like influence, the greater is the beauty and fruitfulness that result.

We make these illustrative remarks, partly as suggestive of the spirit in which the Lord's witnesses should bear testimony;

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and partly, we gratefully believe, as accounting for the wonderful success of the truths we teach in reaching the minds and hearts of Christian people in all parts of the world. The LORD *hath* helped us! We give thanks, fervently. The work is not ours but His. "Ebenezer!" EDITOR.

GOSPEL MIRACLES AND THE JEWS.

IN two articles which lately appeared in the RAINBOW, I drew attention to the general question of "Revelation and its Evidences," in connection with the argument of the late John Stuart Mill. I wish to add further thoughts suggested by the same writer, and having reference to the light in which the miracles of our Lord and His apostles were regarded by the people before whom they are alleged to have been wrought.

One main objection made by Mr. Mill to invalidate the testimony in favour of the Gospel miracles is, that it was given "in times when no one thought it worth while to contradict any alleged miracle, because it was the belief of the age that miracles in themselves proved nothing, since they could be worked by a lying spirit as well as by the Spirit of God" (237). With that admixture of truth which is necessary to give credit to every plausible error, it is difficult to imagine a statement more opposed to fact than this. The sole element of truth in it is, that it was the common belief among the Jews that works beyond human power, or the spontaneous agencies of nature, and as such supernatural, were sometimes wrought by evil spirits. The broad startling inferences which Mill draws from this fact are justified neither by the premiss itself, nor by the opinion or conduct of any class whatsoever among the Jewish people, or of any Gentile nation.

We fully admit, then, that it was a very common belief in the land where the miracles of Christ are alleged to have been performed, that it was within the power of evil spirits, and permitted to them by God, to perform works accounted "supernatural." But when this is conceded, the concession will be found, upon examination, to serve Mill's purpose in no respect whatever. In order to serve his purpose it should be shown that the supernatural power, whether justly or unjustly attributed to evil spirits, was equal to, or in any considerable measure approached, that miraculous power which was attributed to Christ first, and afterwards to His disciples. If supernatural power, *to this extent*, were generally conceded to evil spirits in the land and time of the alleged Christian miracles, there can be no question that it would lead very naturally to the inferences which Mill has drawn from the fact that some supernatural power was, beyond doubt, attributed to them. If Jesus and His disciples were supposed, even by His bitter enemies,

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to have claimed to work nothing different or higher than it was generally thought that evil spirits were fully capable of working, and did, in fact, not infrequently work, it is very conceivable that many people, or possibly all, as Mill says, might not have thought it worth while to contradict them; and that the general impression among those who heard of them, or witnessed them, would be that, even on the supposition that they were, one and all, true as matters of fact, and as supernatural matters of fact, they proved nothing for that claim which was based on them, viz., that Jesus Christ was a *Messenger sent from God.*

We may go much further than this. Ignorant as we are to a considerable extent now as to what was the exact nature of the power attributed to evil spirits, there can be no doubt that a pretty accurate idea of the extent of that power was formed among the Jews generally, and especially by the learned and priestly class. Now, if the power claimed to have been exercised by Christ resembled in extent and nature the power ascribed to evil spirits, there can be no doubt that Christ's power, as claimed by Him, would not merely fail to convince the general mind that He was sent from God, but would go a very considerable way in the opposite direction; viz., towards convincing them that He was commissioned by the Devil. Such would be the inference generally drawn, and especially by the ruling priestly party. They would in all probability, so far from wishing to deny the alleged works of Christ, rather wish them to be accepted as matters of fact, and then triumphantly appeal to the people that these works were indeed, to a very full extent, confirmation of their view of Christ, viz., that He was an impostor and a deceiver of the people; and as such, sent by Satan to draw away the hopes and the faith of the children of Abraham from the true hope of Israel. They would be commented upon, not as proving nothing for Christ, but as proving a great deal against Him.

But whether they were supposed adverse to His claims, or merely as proving nothing for them, the whole force of the inferences based upon them by Mill rests upon the supposition that the supernatural power ascribed by national consent to evil spirits was no higher, and in no material respect different from that claimed by Christ, and known by His enemies and friends to be claimed by Him. If it was no higher, Mill's inference possesses great force; force we would not feel ourselves fairly permitted to deny, nearly, if not altogether equal to that asserted by him. But if the power, justly or unjustly, attributed among the Jews to the agency of evil spirits, were altogether inferior in degree, and in many important respects of a different kind from that claimed by Christ, and known to be claimed by Him, in that case Mill's inference possesses no force whatsoever. The claim by Christ to a supernatural power, conceded to be altogether superior to that ascribed to evil spirits, would and did excite comment and attention alike on the part of

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friends and enemies as indicative, if true, of the entrance of a new and higher agency upon the field.

Now this is what we assert for the miraculous claims of Christ. We do not deny, of course, nor are we in the smallest degree concerned to deny, that *some* of the alleged supernatural works of Christ rank no higher than those which evil spirits were supposed to be capable of performing. The exercise of real supernatural power does not in the least measure imply that it should be confined to what may be generally accounted *supernatural in the highest degree*. We are not to expect that all the miracles of Christ should be miracles such as raising the dead or healing one born blind. We should rather expect miracle, in that field to which those of the New Testament are nearly confined, viz., the counteracting of the effects of disease and death, to range over the *entire field of human malady;* thus ranging, the supernatural power ascribed to Christ would exercise itself upon departments of that field where the power ascribed to evil spirits, and the power admitted to be within the power of man also, were supposed to work. And we may thus reasonably expect that *some* of the works ascribed to Christ may be no higher, so far as their effects but not their agency is taken into question, than works which evil spirits were supposed capable of working, or which are supposed to lie within the power of imagination, working upon and subduing disease for a longer or a shorter time.

But we claim for the miracles of Christ, *as a rule*, that they were of a higher, and altogether different kind than that ascribed to the agency of evil spirits, or within the range of imagination; or of faith reposed upon ordinary men, or exercised in any way, or manner, by ordinary men. With regard to evil spirits, while in the general we allow that miracle was supposed to lie within their power, as well as within the power of the Spirit of God, we deny altogether that any such power, in its general working, as is ascribed in the Gospels to Christ, and known to have been claimed by Him, was supposed by national Jewish opinion, or the opinion of any known religious party or sect among the Jews, to be possessed by evil spirits. One usual alleged work of Christ, viz., the casting out of evil spirits from the bodies of men, was said by the Pharisees to lie within the power of the Devil; and accordingly, it was plainly, openly, and pertinaciously attributed by His enemies to the aid of the Devil (Luke xi. 15; Matt. xii. 24). "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the devils," was the comment of the enemies of Christ on all such works of His! His power here was affirmed to be no higher in nature than that possessed by evil spirits; though even upon this field of demoniacal possession, a power was claimed by and ascribed to Christ higher than that ascribed by general Jewish consent to the reputed spirit exorcisors of their nation (Luke xi. 14; Matt. ix. 33).

The conduct of the enemies of Christ is very valuable in this

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respect, that it shows their general mind as regards His alleged miracles. Where they thought it lay within their power, in consonance with Jewish opinion and their own teaching, to ascribe Christ's work to Satanic agency, they openly and greedily so ascribed it. They were glad to do so; they thought it for their credit and reputation to do so. It is, therefore, only the natural and the reasonable inference from their conduct in this instance to suppose that, wherever and whenever these same bitter enemies of Christ could, with any show of plausibility, ascribe His works of another kind to diabolical agency, they would do so.

Now, with the ascription of His power over devils to diabolical co-operation, they began and ended accusations of this kind against Christ. The Gospels, which tell us very freely and without any concealment the worst charges made against Him by His foes, never once hint that they ever dreamed of attributing a single work of His of a different kind to Satanic aid. There is not a hint to that effect in the four Gospels. There is not, we believe, among the Rabbinical writings subsequent to the lifetime of Christ, any mention that a tradition of the kind had been handed down to them from His contemporaries.

But silence of this kind is not all. We have positive evidence that it was universally conceded on the part of every section of the Jewish people that the supernatural power claimed by Christ, and reputed to have been exercised by Him, was of a kind altogether different to that ascribed, whether with truth or not, to diabolical power. We will first refer to some cases as showing this on the part of His enemies.

In the ninth chapter of John's Gospel we have that narrative of the cure of the man born blind, which has already been referred to in the course of these papers. Its minuteness and circumstantiality of detail make this record valuable in many respects. The cure of this well-known man near, or probably at one of the gates of the temple, drew upon it the closest scrutiny of the Pharisees of Jerusalem. They are unable to deny it as a matter of fact, or as a supernatural event. It was undeniable; and after the closest examination, was admitted. But then came the question, how to get rid of its obvious inference? It was an ugly fact staring them in the face, from which common minds were verging towards the opinion, or the suspicion, or the faith, that Jesus of Nazareth was what He claimed to be, and not what His enemies, the Priests and Pharisees, said He was. Even among the Pharisees themselves ideas of this intolerable kind were insinuating themselves (ver. 16). What was to be done? Insinuate or assert every imaginable plea by which the force of the miracle might be abated and set aside! This is done. One circumstance in the cure afforded a plausible handle for objection; viz., that it had been wrought upon the Sabbath day. This is accordingly laid hold of and dwelt upon as proving more against Christ than the miracle proved for Him.

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Christ was "a sinner," a breaker of the "Sabbath day!" His origin is dwelt upon! "This fellow, we know not from whence He is!" The Man is attacked; but what of the Man's work? From the charge that He was a sinner, how easily and rapidly would the envenomed mind of the enemies of Christ run on, if that were possible, to the kindred charge that He was here but an emissary of the Devil, working wonders by diabolic aid! A charge of this kind would be almost forced into their mouth by their accusations of His sinning on this occasion by this very work. If it were indeed their opinion, or that of the people generally, that such works could be done by a lying spirit as well as by the Spirit of God, they would most certainly have said that He healed the blind man by the power of Beelzebub. But they say nothing of the kind. On the contrary they acknowledge that, while Christ was a sinner, it was *God who had wrought this work!* (ver. 24). Unable for a single moment to parallel this miracle with those supposed to be within the power of evil spirits, they assert the absurd and illogical proposition that God had done a work which apparently favoured one of the most blasphemous claims that could be set up against God! From this alleged miracle of Christ, we see that His bitterest enemies confessed that, between His works and those supposed to be within the power of evil spirits, there was a barrier of distinction which no malice or ingenuity could pass.

Just exactly as it was in the case of the alleged miracles of Christ, it was in the case of those of His apostles. Mr. Mill's view, allowing it to be just to the utmost, that miracles could, according to Jewish opinion, be worked by a lying spirit as well as by the Spirit of God, has no practical effect whatever, because the miracles claimed for the apostles were confessedly, in their general character, of a totally different kind from those supposed to lie within the power of the evil spirit. This is seen from the conduct and language of the Jewish Sanhedrim, assembled to deliberate about the miracle wrought by Peter and John on the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple (Acts iv. 16-22). They did not deny the reality of the cure. They could not do so. But neither were they able to class it as, in its nature, proving nothing, because it was of such a kind as might have been wrought by an evil spirit as well as by the Spirit of God. Most gladly would they have done so if they could; for the object of their meeting together was to prevent the effect of this very work, which was operating on the minds of the people. One of the most effectual ways would have been, by showing to the people that the work was, in itself, of no different kind from those which they all allowed could be wrought by an evil spirit. But they can do nothing of the kind. The miracle, they one and all confessed was a *notable miracle;* out of that class altogether which were associated in their and the common mind with the power of evil spirits. Peter claimed it as work wrought by the "God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob"

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(ver. 13). The people, aware of its circumstances, hailed it without a dissentient voice as a work of God (ver. 21). The rulers and elders and scribes, with Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest (vers. 5, 6), all of them men of the first influence and knowledge in the nation, and the bitterest foes to the spreading doctrines of Christ, did not dare to say, did not dare to hint, that the miracle was not wrought by God, but could have been effected by some other power. They allow it in the case of the apostles, as before they had confessed in the instance of a work wrought by Christ Himself, to have been "notable;" of the class of wonders wrought by their ancient prophets by the power of God, and cannot attempt to confound it with the works supposed by them to be within the power of the spirits of evil.

From these instances we see how it was with the miracles of the Gospel as regarded by its unrelenting and unwearied enemies. From the very outset of the Gospel it had enemies; malicious, ingenious, and powerful. They began their opposition to it by bringing Jesus Christ to death. Enraged to find that His death had not put a stop to it, but that on the contrary it thenceforward spread more than ever, they seek, in every way permissible to them by the dominant Roman power, to stifle it ere it should assume proportions against which they could not contend. It was amid such a people that the Gospel of Christ was cradled. It was pre-eminently in their metropolis, Jerusalem, that it was nurtured and grew, and from thence that it was propagated. And yet, when the leaders of the opposition to that Gospel come to confer together on its alleged miraculous works, they are compelled, so far from being able to ascribe them to Satan working for and through those deceived by him, to ascribe them *to God*. All the absurdity, or rather the impiety, of such a supposition, *on their idea that Jesus of Nazareth was a deceiver*, is overlooked and stifled by *the overpowering nature of the works*. These they must needs confess to be notable, divine, beyond any other power to effect but that of God. And so they are forced to occupy the position of men affirming that God had wrought works in and through men who either made or sustained claims of a kind the most opposite possible to His will and pleasure! The alleged miracles of the Gospel were indeed, on the confession of its enemies, altogether of a different kind from those which they supposed within the power of evil spirits (John ix. 16).

That which was thought of the miracles of the Gospel by its enemies was thought of them also by its friends. In fact, it was such thoughts of them that first made them friendly to Christ and His teaching. And this was the case alike with the educated and the uneducated among the early disciples. Thus Nicodemus, a man of remarkable erudition, a member of the Great Council of the Sanhedrim, a man acquainted thoroughly with the religious opinions of his people, knowing what was supposed to lie within the power

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of the evil spirits, and knowing, too, the nature of the works ascribed to Christ, unhesitatingly confessed of the latter that they were of a nature and a kind beyond any other power but the power of Almighty God (John iii. 2). He did not say this merely of one miracle, but he pronounced it of all the miracles which Christ had up to this period wrought publicly at Jerusalem, at the great festival of the Passover (John ii. 23). Had he supposed them no other in kind than those popularly thought to lie within the power of evil spirits, they would certainly have had no force with him. It was the *absolutely distinctive nature* of those works which forced this timid time-server at first forth to a living Jesus in the darkness of the night, and afterwards gave him nerve to own a dead Christ as his Master. This distinctive nature of the works of Christ he owned at his first secret interview with Jesus: "Rabbi," he said to Him, "we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God; for *no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him*" (John iii. 2). Such was the deliberate verdict of a learned man, into the composition of whose character very little boldness and very little enthusiasm seem to have entered. This judgment of the erudite councillor is eminently useful to our purpose, inasmuch as it is his judgment on the miracles of Christ as compared with other works which were yet in his opinion also supernatural. Fully acquainted with all these, he yet gives the acknowledgment to the works of Christ that they exceeded them in their character, and exceeded them in this very respect, that, whereas it was possible for the former to have been performed by some power superior to that of man, while inferior to that of God, no power whatsoever could by him be supposed capable of performing the works of Christ except the power of the supreme God.

Such as was the judgment of the learned Nicodemus was the judgment of the unlearned and ignorant man who was led to believe in Jesus of Nazareth from Christ's work of healing upon himself (John ix. 32). He was probably as well, possibly almost better, able to judge comparatively of a matter of the kind than Nicodemus. Extravagant stories of supernatural power are often listened to with cold ear by men of education, neglected by them, and forgotten. It is among the lower strata of society that such chiefly circulate, and in their circulation very often assume characteristics greatly in excess of the original tale. In the blind man before us, we have just the sort of person who would have heard and drunk in all the supernatural stories current among a people possessed of a very large amount of credulity and superstition. Whatever Satan and Beelzebub, and their hosts of inferior spirits might be supposed capable of working upon the bodies or the minds of unhappy men, or on the lower creation, would be listened to greedily by a man from whom was shut out the great source of knowledge derived from sight, and who was therefore thrown exclusively upon information derived through the ear. With all his knowledge of

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supernatural story, he came without hesitation to the same verdict upon the one miracle, with which he was intimately acquainted, that Nicodemus came to on all the miracles of Christ witnessed by him. He expresses his judgment in the unrestrained language natural to illiterate men, and particularly natural to him at a time when all his nature was exuberant with delight on the opening to him of the glorious sense of sight. "Since the world began," he said to his hostile and suspicious examiners, "it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing." Such was this man's judgment; the judgment of the illiterate and the superstitious of the people. Stretching backward beyond all the knowledge of the supernatural of his time, he daringly asserts that, from the very foundation of the world, no work had ever been wrought such as had been wrought upon him. It lay, in his estimation, beyond what any man, unaided by any power less than God's, could by any possibility effect. He certainly did not believe that *his cure* could be worked by a lying spirit, as well as by the Spirit of God. It was altogether of a different kind and nature. Between light and darkness there could not be, to his mind, a more decided line of demarcation than between the mighty work just wrought upon him by one, of whom he knew no more than that His name was "Jesus," and the whole collection of mighty works ascribed to the power of evil spirits. The friends of Christ, literate and illiterate, just as we saw of the enemies of Christ, were of a wholly different mind from that ascribed to them by Mr. Mill. They never dreamed of supposing that, between the alleged miracles of Christ and the alleged miracles of lying spirits, there was any parallel whatsoever. They occupied different positions altogether in the world of the supernatural. Both were above earth. Both were looked up to and wondered at by men below. But the works of Christ lay upwards among the stars; the works of evil spirits were but lying amid the clouds that move in the atmosphere above, but of our earth.

Such as was the judgment of the declared enemies and declared friends of Christ and the Gospel, was also the popular judgment: the opinion of the great mass of the people, who, during the lifetime of Christ, seem not to have been able to make up their minds whether to believe or to reject His claims. To these men preeminently the miracles ascribed to Christ were the grand attraction. His doctrine they avowedly did not comprehend. He spoke to them in parables which He did not explain. They listened to Him gladly and eagerly, but it was certainly not from an overpowering sense of the truth and loveliness of His teaching; for that teaching did not lead them to faith in Him. Neither was it the character and conduct of Christ apart from miracle which was His grand attraction in their eyes. An ascetic character, such as was that of His forerunner, John Baptist, would have overpowered them more. It was the miracles of Christ which drew the rapt attention

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to Him of that fickle people, who would one day throw Him down from a precipice and on another raise Him to the dizzy height of monarchy. Witnessing those miracles, and well aware of the power usually ascribed among them to Satanic agency, it never once occurred to them to doubt that the source of the miraculous power of Christ was in God Himself.

As an example of this we refer to the cure of the palsied man, as related in Matt. ix. Here, as everywhere throughout His life, we see the eagerness with which His enemies laid hold of anything that could be turned against Him, and the fidelity which the writers of the Gospel show in narrating every charge, open or secret, made against their Master. The first address of Christ to the sick man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," is at once responded to in the thoughts of the scribes present by the accusation of blasphemy. Their idea was that Christ was here guilty of the very highest religious crime, that of taking upon Him a power which belonged only to God. Christ reads out for the bystanders the thoughts of their hearts; and then proceeds, in sight of all present, to work His cure. The knowledge on the part of the assembled people that their religious teachers thought Him on that very occasion guilty of grievous sin against God, did not for a moment cause them to doubt the source of the power which they saw displayed before their eyes. No idea crossed them, even for a moment, that any evil spirit was here putting forth his agency: "When the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified *God, which had given such power unto men.*"

We have thus seen the view universally taken among all classes of the Jewish people of the alleged miraculous power of Christ in regard of the principal works ascribed to Him. They never hesitated as to their source. Whatever power they supposed to belong to Satanic influence, they never imagined that the ordinary class of miracles ascribed to Christ belonged to the range of diabolical skill. Even in the only class of works which, so far as we know, was ever by Christ's bitterest enemies attempted to be ascribed to the Devil, namely, the ejection of evil spirits, there was something in the working of Christ which, in the eyes of the common beholders, gave to His works an undoubted superiority, even here. Whatever were the power supposed by them to belong to Satan in this particular field, whatever had been the effects produced by any class of devil-expellers, working from what source we please, in the alleged works of Christ wrought upon demoniacs the beholders recognised a power which they had never before seen put in exercise. Thus in the expulsion of the devil from the dumb man, when, besides the expulsion of the spirit, the dumbness of the man was cured, we read that, "the multitude marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel" (Matt. ix. 33). We are not, of course, here saying anything as to the truth or falsehood of those works of Christ which the Gospels relate to us. We are merely speaking o

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the ideas formed as to their origin and source by the Jewish beholders. Mr. Mill informs us that it was the belief of the age that miracles could be worked by a lying spirit as well as by the Spirit of God. Not disputing his theory *to a certain extent*, we have examined facts in order to find out whether it was true to that extent which would make it of the smallest value to Mr. Mill in his inferences from it. It is not enough for this purpose to say that, according to popular belief, evil spirits could work miracles. We must also inquire, *to what extent* it was popularly believed that evil spirits could work them? If it was indeed believed that evil spirits could do *the same, or equal miracles* to those which God was believed to work, and that the miracles now in question, viz., those of Christ, were not in their nature different from those which evil spirits were thought capable of working, then indeed Mill would have good ground for his idea that no one would think it worth his while to deny the miracles of Christ, since no one thought them, even if true, capable of proving His doctrine true, or Himself a Messenger from God. But *here* Mill's groundwork altogether fails him. It was never believed among the Jews that evil spirits were capable of doing wonders equal to those of God. A theistic people never dreamed of paralleling the power of God with that of Satan. The Manichœanism of the Gnostics was not accepted by a nation which had learned its ideas of God and creation from the Books of Moses, commented upon by the Psalms and Isaiah. HENRY CONSTABLE.

THE CHURCH.

"By revelation He made known unto me the mystery . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel."—Eph. iii. 3-6.

"Christ . . . loved the Church . . . that He might present it to Himself, . . . We are members of His body."—Eph. v. 25, 27, 30.

"The Church which is His body."—Eph. i. 22, 23.

"He is the head of the body, the Church."—Col. i. 18.

"The Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."—Heb. xii. 23.

IT is impossible to read the New Testament with attention, without perceiving that it contains pictures of a visible and an invisible, a nominal and a real Church. Things are said of the nominal which are inapplicable to the real, and of the real which cannot be affirmed of the nominal. Unless this distinction be kept in mind, a clear idea of the Church of Christ, which is His body, cannot be realised; but it is of the utmost moment, both for doctrine and practice, that we should realise this idea; and the means

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of doing so are not far to seek, if we cast aside our hierarchical and denominational notions, and take the word of inspiration as our sole guide.

Hierarchy is mentioned in Scripture, and so are the divisions into formal communities under different names, but they are mentioned only to be condemned. Allusions to the foreseen growth of the first are found in such cautions as this: "But be not ye called Rabbi, for One is your Teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth, for One is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters, for One is your Master, even Christ" (Matt. xxiii. 8-10). And the second is severely rebuked in the following language: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. i. 10-13). And then, after showing the folly of the world's wisdom in relation to God's plan of salvation, and pointing out how God hath chosen what the world calls foolish, and weak, and base, and despised things, he adds that there is to be no glorying except in the Lord, and that he determined neither to recognise any of their contentions and divisions, nor to adopt the excellency of speech which the world admires, resolving to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ, even the Crucified One, whose cross was such a stumbling-block to the Jew and such folly to the Greek. After this he returns to his complaint, affectionately but earnestly addressing them in this manner: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye now able. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and division, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase" (1 Cor. iii. 1-7). Alas! these hierarchical assumptions, "lording it over God's heritage," reached, as ecclesiastical history proves, the full and fearful development shown in vision to the Apostle John. "I saw," says he, "a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with

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gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration" (Rev. xvii. 3-6). And upon the other hand the jealousies, bitterness, strife, and fierce contentions of rival sects or churches, have filled our libraries with volumes that breathe anything and everything but the meekness and gentleness of Christ. It is clear, then, that we cannot look to any visible community for the wonderful thing, the mystery hidden from past ages, but revealed in apostolic times, as the peculiar first-fruits' reward of the rejected Lord. No ecclesiastical corporation, Papal or Protestant, and no brotherhood of professed disciples of Jesus, has the shadow of a right to appropriate to itself the high and honourable designation of "*The* Church." By whomsoever advanced, this assumption must be regarded, not as evidence of apostolic truth, but of fellowship with the apostasy of Christendom foreshadowed in our Lord's parables, predicted by the apostles, and signified by the letters to the seven symbolic churches in the Book of Revelation.

It is no pleasant task to dwell upon the dark side of a great subject, but when duty calls choice must retire; and unquestionably it is better for us to know the truth, though it may disturb our fond notions, than to be deluded by an agreeable fiction, the hollowness of which must be revealed some day, however long covered by ecclesiastical artifice. To search the Scriptures for the truth, and to believe and proclaim that truth when found, is certainly the duty of all who have received Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. To maintain a theory simply because it has grown up in an ecclesiastical community, and been associated with it as part of its general belief, is unworthy of any one who would stand in the light, strong in the faith of revelation, and ready to abandon every shred of thought which was merely of human origin.

There is a church of God and of Christ in the world, but assuredly *it is not of it*. There is a holy community, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, whose members are scattered among the several nominal churches; but all that renders it peculiarly sacred is heavenly in source and character, and invisible to the human eye. This peculiar temple of God is the pledge to the Heir of all things that His reserved rights shall be publicly bestowed at the proper time. Like its Head, it does not strive, nor cry, neither does any man hear its voice in the streets; that is to say, expressions of contention, assertions of supremacy, warlike shouts, come not from it. "Behold what manner of love," gratefully says one of its members, "the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore"—What? Some distinguish-

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ing mark of Divine favour, visible to every eye, and commanding the admiration of society? No!—"therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John iii. 1). The Lord of glory tabernacled among men; but who or what He was the world neither knew nor cared. It turned away its face from Him as unworthy of a moment's attention; so His Church, though a partaker of the Divine nature, and therefore immortal, is unknown in her real character, and despised by the world as a poor foolish thing, the victim of a diseased imagination. She has no right to expect favours from a world that gave frowns to Him whom her soul loveth. He told her what she was to experience during His absence preparing a mansion for her. "If the world hate you," He said, "ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therethe world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me" (John xv. 18-21). Do not forget these things; keep in mind especially your relationship to Me, and look not for ease where I have had hatred and persecution. The world knows not Him that sent Me, knows not Me, knows not you. "There standeth one among you whom ye know not" (John i. 26), said John Baptist to the deputation from Jerusalem, respecting Jesus. So of the Church may it be said to the world, Ye are altogether ignorant of whence it is, what it is, and whither it is going.

It is a *stranger and a pilgrim here*. This is not its rest. Its Divine Head, its Lord, its life, its all, had not where to lay His head, when, with veiled glory He sojourned among men in pursuance of the wondrous undertaking which led Him from the regions of uncreated glory, to this sin-smitten earth; and it would ill become His Church to set her affections on things seen and temporal, and to love a world which refused Him a lodging. A rest remaineth, and an inheritance is reserved for her—a better rest than softest couch or gilded palace, and a richer inheritance than ever legacy bequeathed to mortal—but she must wait for both until the Lord of her heart comes into possession of His royal rights. She lives by faith, not by sight. All the graces that adorn her, the fruits of the Holy Spirit who has sealed her to the day of redemption, must be tested by the heats and colds, the biting storms and still more dangerous calms of time, and tried by the discipline, often severe, but always loving, of a Father's invisible hand. The end in view—the purpose to be served by this education in the wilderness—is so exceedingly important, both as it relates to God's ultimate design, and her own qualification for the destiny that awaits her, that counsels to patience are found to be

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the very voice of Fatherly love. "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James i. 2-4). When the mind of the Christian is in full sympathy with that of his Lord, he sees in such an admonition a depth of most blessed meaning. "I reckon," said one who was privileged to have an extraordinary insight into the mystery of the Church—"I reckon,"—I have come to this certain conclusion—"that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. viii. 18). And again, "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 15-18).

Men who speak thus, declare plainly that they are on a journey; that the roughness of the road, though it pains and incommodes them, only strengthens the purpose to press forward; that their lofty aspirations soar beyond the highest heights of human ambition; that their hearts are set on a prize which will retain its lustre and value when the grandeur and glory of earth's glittering coronets and crowns shall be forgotten for ever, or remembered only as the meteoric flashes of a hollow dream; that though the tempest sweep, and the lightning flash, and the thunder roll, they cannot, will not, shall not turn back; and thus animated by a voice heard, and sustained by an arm felt, only by themselves, they will continue their marvellous, God-ward pilgrimage with girded loins, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the Revelation of Jesus Christ. What a sublime thing is this rising of the heart to God! Where, throughout all the regions of human thought, is there anything to compare with it? Talk of the evidences of religion! Can you, with the eye of faith—for this region is not visible to that of sense—look upon this wonderful fact and ask for evidence? Here is the spirit of the saint, rising in adoring confidence and filial love to the very presence of God and the Lamb; realising its birthright's bliss in holy communion with the Father and the Son. This is no imaginary picture of possible privilege at rare intervals; it is the actual experience of the children of God, the saints who constitute the Church of the firstborn. And a wonderfully blessed fact connected with this is, that in ascending thus to the place where Jesus is, so far from feeling like strangers in a strange place, the idea of home happiness is there realised in the sweetness of a holy peace. "Whom, having not

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seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. i. 8).

This brings us to another characteristic of the Church: it is *a citizen of heaven*. This does not mean that the place called heaven is the end or local goal of its earthly sojourn; but that the citizenship, community, or commonwealth of Christ's people is now in heaven. "For our conversation," that is to say, citizenship, "is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 20, 21). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace; wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. i. 3-6). "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ—by grace ye are saved—and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 4-6).

These Scriptures, and those of which they are specimens, point to an association with Jesus, too close, too sacred, to mean merely something which shall be in the future. They describe a present privilege of the most hallowed kind. They can teach nothing short of this, that there is a union, nay, a oneness, between the Saviour and His people, which results in their being virtually wherever He is actually present. The high priest of Judaism had the names of the tribes of Israel upon the precious stones of His breastplate when he appeared before the Lord in the Holy of Holies; but our Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our profession, appears in the presence of God, not only as our forerunner and representative, but as embodying His people in Himself. The arrangement of the eternal purpose, in respect to this, is truly wonderful. He is there, not for Himself merely, but for His Church. Hence Paul writes, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Why? "For ye are dead,"—ye died—crucified with Christ, "and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 1, 2). This last position is uncommonly beautiful and suggestive. Where are saints, that is the reality of them, their life, themselves, not their earthly shadows? In heaven, "hid with Christ in God," until the time of their Lord's appearing. The life of the Church is in the keeping of the ascended Saviour, and He is able to keep it until the day of

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His return, when both He and His saints will for the first time, always excepting the typical glance on the mount of transfiguration, become visible in unveiled glory. Nay, further, as if to show the impossibility of any church-life apart from Christ, it is immediately added that He Himself is our life: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 4). In this line of thought, indeed, we cannot speak of Christ and His Church as separate. He is the Head, they are the members; He is the Life, they are the body He animates. Hence such glowing gems of speech as these: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John i. 4). "I am the resurrection and the life" (John xi. 25). "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John xiv. 6). "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John i. 2). "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11). "The Church which is His Body" (Eph. i. 22, 23). "He is the head of the body, the Church" (Col. i. 18).

From all this then it is clear that the union of the saints with their ascended Lord is in His life. Virtually where He is there are they; for their life is with Christ, nay, Christ *is* their life. For any members of this celestial community, therefore, this body of the heavenly calling, to pass their days amidst the surging billows of doubt, or under the dark cloud of unbelief, is a wrong done to Christ, and a heavy affliction brought upon themselves. Let us feel that we have no sin that He has not expiated, no sorrow in which He does not sympathize, no discipline that He does not conduct for our welfare, and no future that is not completely under His control, and the animation of a Divine faith and a joyous hope will sustain us to the end, whether that end be our unclothing or our being clothed upon. Let us understand clearly that we have no life apart from Him, no interests which are not His, and no work to do in the world but to bear witness for Him, and the cloud-shadows of the wilderness will not be interpreted as interruptions of our communion with the Father and the Son, far less as omens that our salvation is in peril, and that the work of the Anointed of God is a failure so far as we are concerned. These black bewildering thoughts have no justification in the record, and we should not grieve the Spirit of Christ and rob ourselves of joy by cherishing them.

The Church is *the temple of the Holy Spirit.* This precious truth meets a difficulty which otherwise would press heavily upon us. That difficulty may be thus stated. Admitting all that you have said respecting the heavenly citizenship of the saints, their oneness with Christ their life, and their consequent privileges and safety, it must be allowed, upon the other hand, that the individuals composing this chosen family dwell in mortal bodies, are exposed to trials and temptations from the flesh, the world, and the devil, and are confessedly insufficient of themselves to fight the battle which

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all this involves. How then is this state of things to be met? The triumphant answer is, It *has* been met! It was anticipated from the first. Our Lord left not His sorrowing ones with only a legacy of tears and a prospect of fierce persecution. He left them the boon of His own peace, and the promise of His abiding Spirit. That promise was fulfilled at the appointed time, the glorious evidence that the Son had taken His place at the Father's right hand, the accepted High Priest of the temple not made with hands, and the accomplishment of His purpose to consecrate a living temple on earth. Shortly afterwards, consequently, men in whom that Spirit dwelt, guiding them into all truth, could write to their fellow saints in this fashion: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16). "Ye are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16). "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 19-22).

Thus the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, consecrates the saints, and a second time prepares "a body" for Christ. His blessed services to that body are manifold. He cleanses, enlightens, cheers, strengthens, leads, checks, rebukes, humbles, as the ever varying circumstances of the case may require. By Him they are enabled to bear up under trials, to appropriate Divine promises, to grow in grace, and to live in the world so as in some measure to glorify God. Led of the Spirit, they mind the things of the Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). He is the Spirit of adoption by which they call God Father, the witnessing Spirit by whom they know that they are the children of God, and the gracious helper of our infirmities; "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). He is the distributor of the various gifts which the Church needs for mutual edification, and the services to which her Head calls her. And He is the sealing Spirit, and the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of the glory of God.

All these facts again point to the complete efficacy of our blessed Saviour's meditation, in consequence of which the Holy Spirit comes down from heaven to dwell and operate in the hearts of men whom He first unites to Christ. What a thought—the Son of man, at the right hand of God in heaven, and the Spirit of God in the hearts of men upon the earth! What shall we say to these things? O the boundless wisdom of our God, and O the stupendous achievements of this blessed Second Adam, Emmanuel, God with us!

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Surely the story of the Church when it shall form the subject of lofty thought and eloquent speech, by unclouded intelligences in the ages to come, will bring out more and more the manifold wisdom of God and the exceeding riches of His grace.

The Church has *a glorious future*. In relation to this the Holy Spirit is also working. He is making the saints meet for their inheritance in light. He is anointing the kings and priests of the next dispensation. Surely we may conclude that the justification, adoption, separation, cleansing, and spiritual training of a man point to a future, not of honour and dignity which shall merely terminate upon himself, but of high services of some kind which shall benefit others and glorify the Lord under whose authority and by whose appointment such service shall be rendered. It is hardly conceivable that all this expenditure of Divine thought, and application of Divine agency and Fatherly watchfulness over His children whilst they are subjected to the chastening which He sees necessary, mean nothing more than the perfecting of the saints, the reaching forward to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. If we can glorify God here in our nonage, amidst all our follies, and notwithstanding our feebleness, by work and labour of love, by kindness, forbearance, charity, by doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith, is it possible that when we shall have acquired our full intellectual and moral powers, shall have left behind for ever the burden and the darkness of mortality, and stand in all the vigour of perfect men in resurrection, there will be no employment for us, no honourable service to our great King,—*then* in possession of His royal rights,—and no practical outlet for our wondrously strengthened and perfected faculties? Who can believe this? The thought is impossible to men who find in holy activity one of the joys of existence, and whose deep consciousness of obligation to Christ often prompts the question, "What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits to us?"

The fervour of apostolic prayers for the development of grace and the increase of knowledge in the saints, suggests that the harvest fruits in resurrection-life of this seed-time of being will be something greater far than the lustre of a passive glory. That glory will also be seen in active service. Under the present dispensation, angels are ministering spirits for those who shall be heirs of salvation; but unto the angels God hath not put in subjection the world to come; for it will be ruled, under the Prince of Peace, by those who are seen in apocalyptic vision, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. v. 9, 10).

In the parable of the Pounds the future sovereignty of the saints is clearly exhibited. Because the people thought that the kingdom

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of God should immediately appear, our Lord describes a certain nobleman going into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. He delivers money to his servants, with the charge, "Occupy till I come." On his return, having received the kingdom, he investigates the conduct of the servants during his absence, rewarding the diligent and punishing the indolent. The man whose pound had gained ten pounds receives authority over ten cities, and he whose pound had gained five, is appointed ruler over five cities. Here is the principle which, I doubt not, will be adopted by our Lord in the distribution of power and authority in His coming kingdom. The Holy Spirit is now dividing gifts and graces to every man severally as He will, for the upbuilding and completion of the body of Christ, and when the body shall be complete the Lord will select from it those who are to be the princes of His vast dominion "under the whole heaven."

It is honourable to take rank amongst the princes of the earth in this mortal state; but what will it be to stand among the crowned kings invested with authority by the King of kings in resurrection-life? Some of those who are utterly unknown to the potentates of the world, and who pass their lives in difficulty and trouble, striving hard to do what is right and honest and true, are nevertheless destined to a royal dignity immeasurably superior to any that was ever reached by the greatest sovereigns of history. To be "the brethren" of the "Lord of all," is a privilege, and to bear rule with Him is a prospect well fitted to make His saints submit to any mode of discipline He pleases, for they may rest assured that the nature of their training has reference to the position they will be called to occupy in His kingdom.

Meanwhile the promises to the conquerors suggest what vast variety of reward and what special honour the Lord intends for His faithful ones. There is the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God to Him that overcometh in the Church of Ephesus; he that overcometh in Smyrna shall not be hurt of the second death; the hidden manna, the white stone, and the new name are to him that overcometh in Pergamos; he that overcometh in Thyatira, and keepeth the Saviour's works unto the end, shall have power over the nations; he that overcometh in Sardis shall be clothed in white raiment, and Christ will confess his name before His Father and before His angels; to the conqueror in Philadelphia the Lord speaks thus, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name;" and to him that overcometh in Laodicea, the Lord says, "I will grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

EDITOR.

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CHRISTMAS CAROL.

"God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night."—JOB xxxv. 10.

HE "giveth songs," and then we sing,
Glad songs of morning light,
Then music fills the sunny day,
And all the scene is bright;
But oh! how dewy-sweet the songs
He giveth *in the night!*

'Twas starry-night o'er Bethlehem,*
When that rich strain was pour'd,
The carol of the heav'nly host,
The harmony adored—
"Goodwill on earth, and Peace to men,
With Glory to the Lord!"

To hearts that wake, to ears that hear,
Those Angel voices ring,
"Good tidings of great joy for *you*,
Behold, we come to bring"—
A *night-born* song for endless *day*,
A Saviour, Christ, the King!

Hastings, 1881. MRS. JOSEPH FEARN,
Author of "Plain Rhymes on the Pentateuch," &c.

THE VISION OF THE THRONE.

"THE revelation of Jesus Christ" relates to the past, the present, and the future. Historico-prophetic in character, it consists of elemental principles and parts adopted by the will of God from the previous books of Holy Scripture, and combined and arranged by the wisdom of God. From the First Book of Moses to the Epistle of Jude inclusive, the historic, the symbolic, the prophetic, and the didactic have been rendered contributory to its composition, and subservient to its paramount design.

The prophetic parts of the book have been variously, and diversely, constructed and applied. But this circumstance does not touch the intent for which the following expositions are written. The end proposed is to afford assistance to the children and saints of God, in their meditations on the glories of Him who loved them and gave himself for them.

Before commencing the expositions, certain first principles of the book must be noticed, so that they may be considered and borne in remembrance.

1. The book is "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to

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* Luke ii. 8-14.

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Him" after He had returned into the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

2. The book is not in any respect a revelation of God the Father. Neither is it a revelation of the *Person** of the Son, but is a revelation of His Divine perfections and official prerogatives and powers—"over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

3. The book is not in any particular an "unveiling of the invisible world." The seer "was in the Spirit" when he beheld the visions of God. He was in a trance. His natural capabilities were in a state of quiescence, and the Spirit of God was to him instead of his faculties of seeing and hearing. Mentally, he was placed on an exceeding high observatory, whence he beheld the scenes which he has described,—both the seemingly celestial and the seemingly terrestrial.

4. Seeing that the book consists of elemental principles and parts adopted from the previous books of Holy Scripture, an acquaintance with the truth as previously revealed is essential to a true perception of the significance of the visions recorded (Read ch. iv).

This part of the vision must first be contemplated as a whole, and then in its several particulars.

As before remarked, the seer was *mentally* on an exceeding high observatory. On a spacious area in the heavens, he saw a throne, and twelve thrones on either side thereof, arranged in circular order; on which thrones twenty-four elders were seated, clothed in white robes,—their brows being adorned with golden garlands. Above and around "the throne" was an architectural ornament in form of a rainbow, and of the brilliant colour of the emerald. Right before the throne were seven glowing lamps. At a little distance in front of the throne stood a crystaline laver; and amid the circle of thrones were four preternatural creatures.

Now, as this marvellous assemblage existed only in the ideality of the seer, therefore, without a corresponding conception of the scene and its various objects, it is not possible to understand the vision.

1. Abstractedly considered, "the throne" is the symbol of the eternal and absolute Sovereignty of God—AS GOD, in the absoluteness and invisibility of Godhead. But in the design of the vision, that throne is the symbol of the universal Supremacy of Jesus Christ in glorified manhood,—the Lord of all.

The vision is in part a response to the words, "Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." It is a revelation of the good pleasure of the Father to glorify the Son in accordance with those words of truth: "Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet."

The throned Monarch was concealed from view by a brilliant curtain, consisting of the associated resemblances of the jasper and sardine, two of the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest of Israel. The truth signified is, that universal dominion is vested in Him of whom it had been said by the Spirit of prophecy, "He shall be a priest upon His

* It is of the first importance that true Christians should bear in mind that the Apocalypse does not include any personal representation of the Son of God; and that any imagined or pretended portraiture of Him is either idolatrous or profane, If it be regarded with religious veneration, it is idolatrous; and if it be used for artistic ornamentation, such use is a profanation of His holy name.

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throne;" and whom Nathaniel confessed, saying, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel."

2. The throned elders—*pictorially regarded*—are the Supreme Council of the Divine Monarchy. *Designedly*, they bring to mind "the thrones of the House of David;" and thus, the throned Counsellors of the Davidian Dynasty. In the intent of the vision they constitute an integral part of "the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is shown by the position of their thrones—in relation to and on equality with "the throne."

Their appellation is the official and historic title of Senatorial wisdom and authority. In the intent of the vision, they are venerable *personifications* of the Divine legislative and administrative intelligence, wisdom and authority of the Lord Christ, the "Wonderful Counsellor" of whom Isaiah testified; and whose wondrous works, and wisdom's ways, are exalted themes in David's ancient psalms.

The white robes of those dignified personifications are symbolic of the purity and perfectness of the Legislation of the Lord Christ, and of the equity of His Administration. And their golden garlands * are emblems of His appreciable excellence or moral glory—the illustrious ornament of His governmental ways.

3. The seven lamps of fire before the throne—said to be "the Seven Spirits of God"—are symbolic of the truth, that the sevenfold or complete energies of the Spirit of God—the Divine Agent in universal government—are active in the maintenance of the supreme dominion of the Christ.

4. The lightnings, thunderings, and voices proceeding from the throne, announce that He who sits upon the throne is the Holy One of Israel; that, His dominion is over a world in which sin and iniquity abound; that He will yet manifestly assert His right to reign as the Lord of all, and that, in the end, He will vindicate His authority by the destruction of evil.

5. The rainbow, "green as an emerald round about the throne," is the memorial of the Divine covenant of providential goodness and mercy instituted in the days of Noah, on the basis of the fore-appointed sacrifice of Christ, and of which He is the Administrator, as the "One Mediator between God and men." The natural rainbow is the token and pledge of that covenant; and the emerald arch around the throne is the token and pledge of a more abundant bestowment of providential bounties, when the Lord Christ shall have established His kingdom over all the nations upon earth, by the suppression of both moral and physical evil.

The emerald hue of that arched ornament of the throne is emblematic of Divine condescension. God has clothed the earth with green, and the green earth was the basis of His tabernacle in the wilderness—*the tent of the pilgrim God.*

More especially the brilliant verdure of the arch around the throne is the memorial of the voluntary humiliation of the eternal Word; "who took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also

* In the divine system of Hebrew Hieroglyphics—exemplified in the structure and furniture of the Mosaic tabernacle, and in the vestments of the high priest, —*gold* is emblematic f the appreciable excellence or moral and manifestive glory of the LORD GOD of Israel.

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hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Hence, the memorial of His condescension is the emerald ornament of the throne.

6. The crystalline laver involves an allusion to the bronze laver in the court of the Mosaic tabernacle, and to its ceremonial and symbolic uses. This laver is symbolic of the moral purity of the human nature of the Son of God, and of His perfect holiness throughout His path on earth, till He offered Himself without spot to God. It also signifies that, when He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He passed through death and resurrection to the throne of universal dominion.

7. The four preternatural and vigorous ones are similar to those which Ezekiel saw in vision, and "knew them to be the cherubim." In so saying, he alluded to the cherubic phenomena entabernacled at the east of Eden to guard the tree of life, and also to "the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat."

Ezekiel saw the cherubim bearing away the governmental glory of the LORD from the temple and the city; and afterwards he saw them returning as the associates of that governmental glory. And in the most holy place of the Mosaic tabernacle, the golden cherubim—an integral part of the mercy-seat—were the symbolic conservators of the governmental glory of the LORD. In this vision, the cherubim are emblematic of His executive perfections and powers, for the maintenance of righteous dominion.

The likeness of the lion denotes the majestic might of the Lord of all: the likeness of a young bullock implies His long-suffering or patient forbearance: the face as of a man is expressive of His benevolence towards mankind: and the likeness of a flying eagle tells of His accurate observation of all that is being done on the earth. The multitude of eyes signifies the omniscience of the Lord; and the many wings His preparedness for sudden and swift movement when the time has come for the execution of His revealed and righteous judgments.

The cherubic chant in the emblematic praise is the same that Isaiah heard in vision, antiphoned by the seraphim, when he beheld the throne and glory of the LORD. In that vision, and in this, the chanted praise is an ideal celebration of the Divine holiness manifested in the moral government of the world by the eternal Word prior to His incarnation, and in His present exaltation—the Christ in glorified manhood. It is also prophetic of a fuller display of governmental holiness, when he shall manifestly reign over the earth.

The "Lord God, the Almighty," made known in the history of the Patriarchs, and of the nation of Israel, is He who became man, as it is written, "God was manifested in flesh." The Divine titles in the cherubic chant are His; and the celebration of His immortality is responsive to the assuring words which John heard in the first vision recorded:—"Fear not: I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and became dead; and, behold, I am living unto the ages of the ages. Amen."

And the prostrate worship by the elders, who cast their golden garlands before the throne, is an ideal celebration of the intelligence and wisdom of the "Wonderful Counsellor," who is the actual Creator and Sustainer of the universe, whose manifestive glory shines forth in His wonderful works, and thus His Divine intelligence and wisdom glorify Him (Read ch. v. 1-10).

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It has been shown that the former part of the vision is *wholly governmental.* The redemptive purpose of God, and its fundamental accomplishment are now brought in.

1. The seven-sealed scroll is an emblem of the undivulged counsels of the Godhead. And the proclamation made is an ideal and dramatic challenge to the universe, the intention of which is to show that no created or originated being—however originated and however exalted—is competent to reveal the mind and intentions of God.

2. The lamb, which now had suddenly and mysteriously come into the midst of the throne and the cherubim and the elders, is a marvellous object. That mysterious lamb is a hieroglyphic intimation and illustration of the redemptive achievement of Jesus Christ, who, when on the earth, had been called "the Lamb of God."

3. The appearance of that lamb, as being preternaturally alive and active, is an enigmatic intimation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the power of an endless life—a supernatural, indissoluble, immortal life.

4. The seven horns and seven eyes of that emblematic lamb—said to be "the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth"—are symbolic of the truth that the complete powers and intelligence of the Holy Spirit pertain to the redemptive achievement and relations of Christ Jesus, for the application of the benefits of the redemption accomplished by Him on the cross. The words, "sent forth into all the earth," signify that for effectuating the full intent of redemption, the Spirit of God is *abidingly present on the earth,* in the exercise of His gracious and effectual powers.

5. The action of the emblematic lamb, in taking the scroll from the right hand of the throne, denotes the consciousness of Christ relative to His personal Deity, and His competency to disclose the counsels of the Godhead.

6. The harps, and golden bowls full of incense, possessed by every one of the cherubim and the elders, are said to be "the prayers of the saints." They lead the mind back to the golden bells and odorous incense of the high priest of God for Israel; and they signify the moral melody and spiritual fragrance of the ways of Christ in His celestial Priesthood, particularly in presenting to God the Father the prayers of His needy saints on the earth. And the *possession* of those harps, and golden bowls full of incense, by the cherubim and the elders, is an illustration of the truth that the omnipotence of the "Mighty God" and the wisdom of the "Wonderful Counsellor" are engaged with His heavenly Priesthood in behalf of all who come to God through Him.

7. The "new song" of the cherubim and the elders is a dramatic celebration of the truth, that the title and competency of Jesus Christ to disclose the counsels of the Godhead are made manifest by His works of creation, and His ways in moral government, and are additionally made manifest in His work of eternal redemption,—the effectiveness and value of His redemptive sacrifice being derived from His personal Deity through His human obedience unto death.

From the Received Text, it would seem that the cherubim and elders —with their "harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints,"—were intended to represent glorified saints in heaven, and that those saints are mediators on behalf of other saints on

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the earth. Such is the effect of the pronoun "us" in the "new song." But *that interpolated pronoun* can be accounted for.

The style of the Apostle John includes the rhetorical figure called the *ellipsis*; but some earlier transcriber, disregarding the ellipsis in the "new song," inserted in its place the Greek pronoun *heemas*, "us," which pronoun is not found in two of the most ancient and valuable Greek manuscripts. But when it had been inserted in other manuscripts, the pronouns and verb that follow in the passage were changed from the third person to the first, so that they might agree with the interpolated word, *heemas*. And hence the incorrect reading of the passage, and the false constructions* that have been variously put thereon.

The changes made, from the third person to the first, have been discovered and corrected by learned collators of ancient Greek manuscripts —such eminent men as Lachman, Tischendorf, and Tregelles. And the corrections made by them in the text necessitate the exclusion of the pronoun "us" (Read ch. v. 11-14).†

The immense concourse of superhuman appearances which the seer now beheld around the throne and the cherubim and the elders, and which to his entranced mind were angelic beings, represent ideas of a celestial convocation—a festive assembly of angels and principalities and powers from every province in the heavens, engaged in celebrating the achievement of redemption; ascribing all the honour and glory thereof, and all the riches of blessing resulting therefrom, to Jesus Christ, and to the sacrifice of Himself. Such is the truth illustrated in this part of the vision.

The angels of God celebrated in the hearing of men upon the earth the mystery of the Incarnation; they were observant of the humiliation of the Son of God along His path on earth to "the death of the cross;" they were witnesses of His resurrection and ascension to heaven; and their ideal presence in the vision is as if they had assembled to celebrate His return in glory.

The grand chorus of praise which was heard to resound throughout the creation, and in which all the mind in the universe was one, is both historic and prophetic. It is an illustration of the truth, that all the works of the Lord, in all places of His dominion, praise and glorify Him, by the display made therein of His perfections and powers; and it is anticipative of the consummated results of His victory achieved on the cross over all the powers of evil; for in that consummation the universe

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* All such misconstructions are productive of false conceptions and habits of mind, even in the case of the children of God. The most evil effects are the idolatrous teaching and practice of the worship of *supposed* glorified saints, and of prayers to them, as unto Mediators and Intercessors with God. From this exceeding evil, the true saints and servants of Christ are free; but the minor evils are detrimental to them, touching their advancement in spiritual intelligence, and their communion with God the Father and the Son in the knowledge of the truth.

† Those metaphoric words, "the Lamb that was slain," are in accordance with sacrificial ideas and symbolic imagery; but it must ever be borne in mind that the Son of God died on the cross *by His own volition*, in obedience to the commandment which He had received from the Father; and that it was by that voluntary sacrifice of *Himself* that He annulled sin, and accomplished the redemption of men to God.

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shall have been freed from the presence and the possibility of evil ; and from every province and every world—*and from every being then existing*—in the universe of God, songs of thanksgiving and praise shall ascend to the eternal throne (Read ch. vii. 9-12).

The vision of the throne may now be advantageously reviewed. On a spacious area in the heavens, the entranced seer beheld a circular arrangement of thrones. He who sat on "the throne" was veiled from view by an emblematic curtain. On the other thrones twenty-four elders were seated, clothed with white robes,—their venerable brows adorned with golden garlands. Above and around the throne was an ornamental arch in the form of a rainbow, and having the brilliant colour of the emerald. Before the throne seven lamps of fire glowed. At some little distance in front of the throne stood the crystalline laver : and on the space amid the thrones, stood the four cherubic appearances.

Then suddenly, as if out of the throne, came a lamb, into the midst of the elders and the cherubim—a lamb slain, and yet alive.

And then, with equal mystery and suddenness, myriads of angelic forms appeared around the throne and the cherubim and the elders.

But, in all that august and marvellous assemblage, the redeemed to God from among men are not represented. Redemption, as an accomplished fact, was celebrated in the new song of the cherubim and the elders, and in the acclamations of the celestial myriads. But the redeemed are not personated, nor in any manner symbolized. In relation to *them*, the present vision is the complement of the vision of the throne.

1. The countless multitude of (*seemingly*) human beings were, to the mind of the seer, "out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues ;" and the impression to this effect was given him through the great variety of countenance and colour which he beheld. That multitude are *ideal personators* of the redeemed to God, "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ;" made mention of in the "new song."

Standing before the throne, within the circle formed by the celestial myriads, those ideal personators serve to illustrate a twofold form of the truth, namely : That redemption to God, and salvation by the grace of God, are co-extensive ; and, that all the persons redeemed to God by the sacrificial death of Christ shall assuredly be brought home to God in immortality and glory.

2. The "white robes" of that picturesque multitude are emblematic of the sanctitude which is proper to the children and saints of God. In modern language this sanctitude is called "the Christian character." In Divine teaching it is enjoined as "the holiness without which no one shall see the Lord ;" and therein it is compared to a comely and priestly robe,– the moral and spiritual costume of those who are in Christ. That robe may be truly said to be a gift of God : for its internal origin is the principle of eternal life which is "the gift of God," and is "a divine nature," the moral principles of which answer to the perfections of God ; and the practical development of which is by virtue of the in-dwelling presence and operation of the Holy Spirit in the saints.

3. The "palms in their hands" are the well-known emblems of a pilgrimage performed, a conflict ended, and a victory gained ; and they are pledges of final conquest "through Him who loved us."

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4. The joyous acclamation,—"Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb,"—is expressive of the true faith concerning present and eternal salvation.

He, whose supremacy is symbolized by "the throne," is "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and "the Lamb" is the emblem of His redeeming love and of the redemption accomplished on the cross. To that redemption true believers ascribe their deliverance from the condemnatory power of sin and the penal power of death. To His resurrection they ascribe their eternal life and hope of immortality. Their confession before the world is, that "Salvation is of the Lord." And they delight to anticipate the day when, with all the redeemed and saved, they shall stand before the throne and unite in the joyous acclamation, of which the above is the prophetic symphony and sacred seal.

5. The responsive acclamation of the angelic myriads, and their prostrate worship, signify and illustrate many impressive principles of Divine truth, namely: That, all the angels of God worship Jesus Christ even as they worship the Father, confessing Him their supreme Lord and God: that they study with intense interest the history of redemption, and are now learning, through the progressive salvation of the Church, the manifold wisdom of God: that, the ulterior intent of God, in the salvation of the Church, is to show *to them*, in the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace: and that, through the knowledge thus attained, their moral dignity and blessedness are augmented, and their admiration, delight and worship are the more profound and sublime (Read ch. vii. 13-16).

6. The terrestrial history of the people of God is intimated in the words, "These are they who came out of great tribulation." Retrospectively, these words reach back to the death of Abel, and prospectively their significance extends to the time when the Lord Himself shall come.

In the revealed purpose of God, "the church of the firstborn, enrolled in the heavens," *is one*. The oneness of the body, of which the Lord Christ is the life-giving and immortal Head, is emphatically declared. Even so is it shown that, in the view of God, the sorrows and sufferings of His saints on account of their faith and fidelity is ONE TRIBULATION; and the truth of this is illustrated in the manner in which the ideal multitude before the throne are mentioned as having *together passed through and come "out of great tribulation,"* an historic tribulation of six thousand years or more, and therefore named in the original "the tribulation the great."

7. The perfect sanctitude requisite for presentation before God in the heavens is signified in these words: "They have washed their robes*

* True believers in the Son of God are *themselves* cleansed from their sins; not a trace of the guilt of sin remains; and they are now accepted of God "in the Beloved." He is made unto them "wisdom from God, even righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." They are made to be the righteousness of God in Him. This is the Divine truth concerning the imputed righteousness of Christ. And a moment's reflection will serve to show the true believer that it would be very evil to think, and most evil to teach, that the righteousness of Christ *could* be defiled by the sins of His people, and therefore *would* need to be purified by His own self-sacrifice, to render it fit for the presence of God. But this exceeding evil is involved in the thought and the saying, that the white robes in the vision "signify the imputed righteousness of Christ."

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and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple."

As already shown, those robes are emblematic of the sanctitude or personal holiness and righteousness of the true believers. But, while in this body, all the faithful have sin dwelling in them; and consequently their best obedience is defective. The obedience of the most devout and sanctified is marred by failure and fault. The robes of all saints are historically stained. Therefore those robes must needs be purified and made perfectly white; so absolutely pure and white as to bear the unveiled and manifested light of the Divine holiness, and perfectly reflect its glorious brightness in immediate presence of the eternal throne. Such is the teaching in the vision. But how are the personal characters of the saints to become thus pure and without spot? *Through the exercise of spiritual self-judgment in the felt presence of God, with guileless confession to God, and the exercise of appropriative faith in the all-cleansing efficacy of the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

8. The ideal arrival of the emblematic multitude before the throne involves an allusion to certain events in the history of Israel: their journeyings through the desert, consequent on their redemption out of Egypt; their rest in the land under the peaceful reign of Solomon; and their observance of the annual festivals, when every one of the assembled tribes "appeared in Zion before God."

As already shown, that picturesque and innumerable multitude are emblematic of the whole "church of the living God,"—"the holy Catholic Church" and the celestial "communion of saints"—the holy Catholic Church, never yet seen on earth, and to be manifested as sons of God in the heavens.

The description of the blessedness of the redeemed and saved, when brought home to God in immortality, is given in the way of contrast with their characteristic history on the earth: no more privation and sorrow; no more oppressive travel and toil; no more sighing under the burden of manifold infirmities and the consciousness of in-dwelling sin; no more conflict with spiritual enemies; no more tribulation from human hate and persecution. The last sign of sorrow shall have been effaced by the gentle touch of everlasting love. "He who sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them;" even that same JESUS who loved them and gave Himself for them, and will then have received them to Himself. And in the perennial love of His redemptive and pastoral relations towards them, He will lead them, amid the scenes of their celestial inheritance, to the living fountains of endless and ineffable delights.

Plymouth. WILLIAM MORRIS, M.D.

JOHN MILTON.

THROUGH an unexpected channel the attention of the reading public of England has recently been drawn to an exhibition of the Doctrine of Life, "as advocated in this journal," shall I say?—nay rather, "as interwoven with the entire scheme of Biblical Revelation." The notice to which reference is here made occurs at the close of the

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sixth and last volume of Professor Masson's Life of John Milton, where the biographer is reviewing *The Treatise of Christian Doctrine*, that important work which had engaged so much of the poet's personal and independent study, but which remained in manuscript and practically unknown until our own day. Apparently, Milton was in no great hurry to bring it out in his own lifetime, indulging the confident hope that the period would arrive in God's good time, when there would be no lack of recipient hearts to welcome it. Indeed, the entire style of the preliminary address proves Milton's belief that the treatise would be found unusually important, and he accordingly heads it with this salutation—"John Milton, Englishman, To all the Churches of Christ, and also to all everywhere on Earth professing the Christian faith,—Peace and knowledge of the truth, and eternal salvation in God the Father and in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Milton's treatment of the mighty framework of the spiritual Kosmos, the attributes of Deity, the heavenly hierarchies, and universal providence,—all these topics we may pass by, or leave in his prophetic grasp. It is when he comes to speak of redemption and its issues, of the nature of man, and the sublime alternative of life and death,—it is then that he falls foul of popular theology. Professor Masson applies to the fundamental thesis of this section of the Treatise the strange term of "a surprise." "There runs," says he, "through all Milton's account of Christ's ministry and its effects a surprise of another kind, which the commentators hitherto have shrunk from bringing out. Milton himself introduced it cautiously. It grows out of his doctrine of the radical unity of the soul and body of man, and their necessary inseparability. Applying this doctrine to the consideration of death as brought into the world by the first sin, he has to ask what death really is. The common notion which defines it as the separation of soul and body, is, of course, inadmissible in his theory. 'Here, then,' says Milton, 'arises an important question, which, because of the prejudice of divines in behalf of their preconceived opinions, has usually been dismissed without examination, instead of being treated with the attention it deserves. Is it the whole man, or the body alone, that is deprived of vitality? As this is a subject which may be discussed without endangering our faith or devotion, I shall declare freely what seems to me the true doctrine as collected from numberless passages of Scripture."

And the true doctrine Milton thereupon proceeds to declare, "freely" as he himself says,—"triumphantly" as many of us think. Professor Masson nevertheless pronounces the result "uncommon." This is another strange term—we had "a surprise" lately; now the outcome of Milton's long study of the Bible is uncommon. Yet the Professor must mean what he says, and we know that he chooses his words with great deliberation. Are we to accept his language, then, as the expression of sublime irony, or is it a covert attack on the divinity-mongers of the mediæval age?

Uncommon or not, as Milton's results may appear, his own placid serenity all through the argument is a noticeable feature. Are any of us prompted to the expression of what we may deem a righteous indignation against false readings of the Oracle? Such promptings may well be suppressed when we reflect on the long-protracted indolent

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assent which we ourselves have given to them. But when, like that spiritual athlete, the prophet-poet of the seventeenth century, we resolve to take nothing upon trust, nothing for granted, then will the discipline of personal search bring for us, as it did for him, peace and confidence at least: though not, of course, the solution of every mystery, for this is not granted to man.

When therefore we hear Professor Masson saying that Milton introduces his doctrine cautiously, we are not to suppose that Milton had any misgivings on his own account. Let us rather say that his doctrine comes on the reader like an advancing tide, breaks on the listening ear with the steady tread of an army, secure of victory, yet raising no note of defiance. He knows his ground too well to be cautious in the sense of timidity; though, like all logicians, he never forgot that the enemy's works must be first sapped before the match was applied which should blow them into the air. In this sense, indeed, he may be said to have approached the citadel of error with deliberation; for unimpeachable logic scorns the use of a trumpet; and, like the writers of the New Testament, he could afford to be calm when pointing to issues so illustrious that the faintest whisper of them becomes the most efficient of heralds.

Meanwhile, let none despair of attaining the same quiet security, merely for lack of the ability which he possessed "to toil terribly"—or of the long practised vision with which he could sweep the cycles of classic and patristic theology. Honesty of search is the main requisite, and the only certain road to conviction. As Thomas Carlyle says, "A man can believe and make his own, in the most genuine way, what he has received from another; and with boundless gratitude to that other! The merit of originality is not novelty; it is sincerity. The believing man is the original man; whatsoever he believes, he believes it for himself, not for another. Every son of Adam can become a sincere man, an original man, in this sense; no mortal is doomed to be an insincere man." . . . "Ah me, that a man be self-subsistent, original, true, or what we call it, is surely the furthest in the world from indisposing him to reverence and believe other men's truth. It only disposes, necessitates, and invincibly compels him to disbelieve other men's dead formulas, hearsays, and untruths. A man embraces truth with his eyes open, and because his eyes are open. Does he need to shut them before he can love his teacher of truth? He alone can love, with a right gratitude and genuine loyalty of soul, the hero-teacher who has delivered him out of darkness into light."—*Hero Worship*, 203.

But where has this hero-teacher been hiding himself of late? He started into notice at the Reformation; and since then the echo of his voice has once and again cheered our theological night. Shall we not try to re-awaken that echo? By way of answer to such challenge let us keep Mr. Carlyle's words in memory through a few closing sentences.

When men in the middle ages craved and asked for spiritual guidance, they found what they wanted in the despotic declarations of the Romish Church; and hence, obedience and assent became the cardinal virtue. But the Reformation broke this spell. The Bible was spread open by Tyndale and Luther, and the people were invited to believe that the divine secret was now within their individual reach. And so indeed it

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was, had they all possessed copies of the Word; but Bibles were very scarce in those days, and hard to be got at. It is true they were "appointed to be read in churches," as the title-page of every copy declares, but this did not meet the individual craving. And now, to keep the ignorant laity in their proper place, lo! a new authority is seen to intervene; a new court of appeal issues it decisions. This was the system of religious training which has been in vigorous exercise for the last three hundred years. To a limited extent the Bible was now indeed open, for to the common eye it lay upon the reading-desk, and in front of the preacher. In reality it lay behind him. The preacher stood in front of the Record,* and he gave a solution of its contents as would best support his own authority by disturbing as little as possible the cherished superstition of the masses. Abandoning Tyndale's and Luther's honest method of letting the Bible speak in its own language, the preacher again sought and found his market in the old heresy of inherent immortality, that fatal trap-door, which, so long as it is kept open, makes possible the entrance of any amount of imposture. This may sound harsh, but there really seems no other mode of accounting for the systematic resistance which the Protestant clergy of every name have ever made to the Biblical description of man's nature.

Of course, when generalizing in this way, exceptional cases are kept out of it. Thank Heaven, the exceptional cases are now coming to the front, and making their artillery tell, not merely as skirmishers, but as solid brigades. Heralds have arisen, who, with the courage of their convictions, are saying, "In our hands the Bible shall never again be a Delphic oracle; in our lips the trumpet shall never again give an uncertain sound. And God be judge betwixt you and us."

The last words must still be Milton's. "If," says he, "we have indeed given a bill of divorce to popery and superstition, why do we not say, as to a divorced wife, 'Those things which are yours, take them all with you, and they shall sweep after you'? Why were we not thus wise at our parting from Rome? Ah, like a crafty adulteress, she forgat not all her smooth looks and enticing words at her parting;—'Yet keep these letters, these tokens, and these few ornaments; I am not all so greedy of what is mine. Let them preserve you with the memory,—of what I am? No, but of what I was once, fair and lovely in your eyes?' Thus did these tender-hearted reformers dotingly suffer themselves to be overcome with harlot's language; and she, like a witch, but with a contrary policy, did not take something of theirs that she might have power to bewitch them, but for the same intent she left something of her own behind her. And that her cunning should prevail to work upon us her deceitful ends, though it be sad to speak, yet such is our blindness, that we deserve it; for we are deep in dotage."—*Apology for Smectymnuus.*

And which now of the false jewels which she left behind her has proved to be pre-eminently the divining stone whose magic spell had power to lull the Protestant nations again into sleepy acquiescence with priestcraft? Surely it is none other than this immortal-soulism, and the consequent condition of the dead. The cardinal faith in a Redeemer, neither Rome

* Metaphor by Mr. Baldwin Brown.

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nor all the powers of earth could quench; but to this cardinal faith she had long and successfully attached a system of such profitable mendacities and fatal fascinations, that none but the best and wisest suspected where the root of the evil lay hidden. Some few saw it, and with Milton and Tyndale would have made a clean sweep of the house. But the Kingdom was not yet to be given to the Saints.

J. WAYLEN.

NOTE.—The reader is entreated not to let anything in the above paper be understood as detractive of the superlatively Christian character of many of the clergy. It is system alone which has been assailed, as perilous to truth.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

No IX.

The Carpenter's Shop.

IN order that Christ should be the Redeemer of the world, it behoved Him to enter into human life and to share its essential and universal experiences. His entrance into every condition of human life in which His divinity was to be manifested, set the seal to its redemption. When He tabernacled in our flesh He signed the death-warrant of disease. He appeared as an infant, and infanticide was doomed; infanticide, not alone of the direct and pagan kind, but of the indirect and Christian kind, effected by the ignorance, the negligence, and the want familiar to Christendom. He entered Himself into the sorrowful and injured ranks of labour because it was the largest lot, and He entered to redeem it. He hung with transgressors on the Cross, in order that the "criminal class" might be abolished; and chose from the ranks of malefactors a thief, to whom He promised a place in Paradise. He encountered Satan in order that He might destroy the power of temptation, and afterwards the Tempter himself. He tasted death for every man that He might rob it of its sting. He entered the grave and broke its yawning jaws.

But a wonderful and loving leniency is to be observed in the mingling of the ingredients which it behoved the Son of Man to drink when He accepted the cup at His Father's hands. In no nation under heaven at the time could the lot of the poor have been shared with less infringement of the dignity of man and of his claim to health and happiness than in Judea. The trade at which He wrought so long was the lightest and healthiest, the least monotonous and least exacting in its demands upon the body and mind that could have been selected. His three years' ministry was a triumphal march, before which priests and rulers quailed; but dared not leap the rampart of His popularity. He had followers in abundance who were ready to lay down their lives for Him. When at last He placed the locks of His inviolability within the shears of His foes, and after restoring the ear of Malthus, bade His life-giving power depart until the morning of the first day, His Father would not suffer His beloved Son to linger in the usually protracted torments of the

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Cross, or to have that body, which disease had never touched, broken in its bones. Three hours ended His agony, and introduced an extraordinary series of attentions to the dead body, which was not—first of the bodies of the human race—to see corruption. Costly linen, the new tomb of a rich man in a garden, Oh, with what sacred care are the remains attended; for, "the Lord careth for the body!" And with costly unguents and most loving hands would that dear body have been embalmed had not Death been compelled to surrender it ere it had marked its victim with a spot of corruption. Eternal life had embalmed the body before Magdalen broke costly ointment about its feet. Eternal Life met the sorrowing Embalmer by the empty grave, and said, "Touch me not!"

Two things strike us here. The first is, that Christ's work was accomplished with a minimum of physical suffering and indignity; showing how bitterly distasteful to the Father is the suffering and indignity to which the ranks of men are every day exposed; and suggesting that, as economy of miracle is a law of His procedure in the government of the world, so too is economy of suffering in His government of the universe. May we not believe with the Laureate:

> "That not a worm is cloven in vain,
> That not a moth with vain desire,
> Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire;
> Or but subserves another's gain."

and do we not mistake when we conceive of the course of the world and of human affairs as ministering only to human results? The world of sense in which we dwell is surrounded and interpenetrated by the world of spiritual intelligences. May we not believe that human events form the subject of their instructive contemplation, and that human experiences take form and colour, with reference to the teaching of angelic beings, as well as the development of the world's predestined history? The moral—the spiritual—universe is surely as interdependent as the physical. And if economy of suffering is God's rule, how great and important must be the results of the huge employment of pain and evil which this world has witnessed!

The second thing suggested is, that it is a mistake to dwell upon the *physical* sufferings of Christ as if they were principal elements in the propitiation, and not rather upon that mental anguish and crucifixion of the soul which He endured at seeing the sins and sorrows of men, and the daily transgression of His Father's laws.

When we attempt to analyse the causes of the mysterious power which the death of Christ exercises over the minds of His disciples—the strongest power known in the spiritual realm—it is like taking a living thing and killing it under the dissecting knife; or, as when drawn to gaze intently upon some miraculous sunset, we perceive it lose beauty every instant, and are left at last with an ashen skeleton amid gathering gloom. This much, however, we may say, that whether the physical sufferings of Christ be considered, or His spiritual sufferings, of which a few of the sons of men have sounded the margin, but none have trodden the depths—these sufferings, rendered necessary, remember, by the requirements of man and the needs of the universe, not by the character of God, owe their sublime potency to the fact that they

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were the sufferings of the Son of God for us. Remove Divinity from the Man of Nazareth, and His story is still a moving one, although in tragic elements far inferior to that of thousands of human histories; but these, compared with the regenerating power of the death of Christ, possess no force at all. One Friend, one Lover, we have, if none beside—and that one God!

Jesus, we have said, entered into the ranks of labour in order to redeem it.

When people in England think upon the progress of Christianity, they are apt to forget that there are eight hundred millions of heathen at present in the world; and when they talk of the progress of civilisation, they appear to forget that it is only the foam flakes, the froth of humanity that has hitherto been irradiated by its light: the base of the waves—the ocean depths—remain dark and restless. The late President Garfield said truly that, "Granite is not so stedfast as the restless sea;" and nothing has been hitherto so permanent as the hopelessness of the lot of the Labourer in the midst of a so-called Christian civilisation; nothing so stable and fixed as the restless pain of the masses that uphold our modern refinements, and the load of our national wealth. But great as is the reproach upon our modern society, implied by the fact that three-fourths of its labouring population live upon the verge of pauperism, and the remainder are constantly slipping over its edge, the reproach that attached to antique civilisation was greater still. When Christ entered the ranks of Labour, many fruit-bearing trees of civilisation had flourished and were flourishing; which all had their roots in slavery. He knew it, and associated Himself by manual toil with that vast army who cannot run for dignity, wealth, and happiness in this life. He put His hand to the saw; it shrieked in the resisting timber, and the shriek went round the world. He did not stand before revolving teeth all day, placing His cunning hand in jeopardy every moment as He made the same part of the same article continuously. He was not wearied at piece-work, or counselled by His advisers to tax His strength to the utmost, so as to leave a weaker brother no chance for employment beside Him; but, had such been His position, He would still have been engaged in the healthiest, safest, and least irksome of the trades. He was no stranger to the anxieties of precarious employment, but was surely a stranger to that ostracism, that impatient toleration of their presence and intercourse, that eager disbelief in any story of their hardships and difficulties, that determination to avoid such an identification with them as would communicate refinement and readiness to reproach them for their unfitness in consequence, which is the distinguishing heritage of the working-classes in English society.

As He wrought and wrought, the stars of His thoughts rose and fell. He knew that every well-spent day snapped a link from the bonds of humanity; and the assurance that He wrought for its assured redemption, kept Him quiet under the pain of His extended knowledge. The long, sad road which the race had yet to tread was all before Him. He knew that the old slavery would give place to a new serfdom, when the old civilisation should crumble beneath the tread of the barbarians. He knew that serfs and villeins would at last be freed, and that labour

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would finally be endowed with the privilege of starving beneath electric lights. He foresaw the period when free white labour, gasping amid its difficulties, should find itself confronted by a new and terrible one, the hordes of Asia. He foresaw that, whereas it had always been accounted a worthy thing for men to make a stand for their homes and altars, that then, when Christian labour reared its best defences before wife and children, common morality and the means of life, that the Press, religious and secular, would sneer at the difficulty and denounce the resistance; while the whole of the trading and upper classes, secretly, if not openly, would desire—not that all might find employment, a thing impossible; or, that there would be a reduction of wages, a thing inevitable; but that the victory would remain with a demoralised and irresponsible Paganism; and so their fine linen be cheaper washed; and a starvation wage-rate roll, with its devastating curse, over the wrecked homes and despairing hearts of their so-called brethren.

He foresaw that there was not a glimmer of hope for the labouring classes so long as they were the producers of wealth; but that if any one of them rose from that position to be a distributor, destroyer, and adulterator of wealth, unlimited prosperity was before him. He knew that Heaven's bounty, in plenteous harvests from the land and catches from the sea, and the facilities of modern locomotion for moving food from the wastes to the cities, when kept within the power of capital to hold and of traders to manipulate, never bring to the poor the relief that they might, and that they ought; that it is within the power of gigantic capitals and commercial combinations to boycott, not Lancashire alone, but the kingdom; and to artificially enhance the price, not of cotton alone, but of all essential things; and this without conferring any benefit whatever upon the original producers. He knew that this condition of things must continue, and the contrasts between destitution and injurious excess of wealth become more disgustingly obtrusive, until and unless the rights of the individual be merged and protected in the rights of the commonwealth, and competition to defraud one another be exchanged for co-operation for the common assistance. God knows that the world is large enough to support many times its present population; that its conditions are rigorous enough to quicken the wits and stimulate the energies of all; that the discoveries of science are valuable only as they relieve the toiler, not as they simply give a catch to the trader; that the earth was meant to be a freehold, and man a family; and that until then, the charities of modern times, ingenious and profuse, may anoint the wounds of civilised society, but can never chase them; that unless the Gospel of God's Son completes its mission to abolish wars, the wars of industries and business included, depending as they do for their success upon the cheapness and degradation of labour, and upon the negation of the teachings of Christ, mankind in the mass will remain half-starved, ignorant, degraded, and diseased; incapable of presenting to the universe even a suggestion of the Image of God.

Let it be considered by those who would glorify trade, that there is nothing which capital has not the power to do, as against those who have less of it; and that it may do all it can with impunity, Christian teachers being witness. It is power dissociated in the sphere of business from conscience and from law. Two examples will suffice to show its power and Christian liberty.

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We will suppose two manufactories engaged upon profitable contracts, which employ them fully; one is burnt down, and its "hands" thrown idle. The other factory seeks now to extend its production, and can presently take on a few more operatives. The contract work allows the usual wage-rate to be paid, but advantage is taken of the fact that so many are solicitous of employment. We will assume that each thinks only of himself, and, through underbidding, plays into the employer's hands; the result is the establishment of a lower wage-rate, in the case, say, of a dozen persons; and this fact, taken together with the numbers still unemployed, enables the manufacturer to enforce a reduction upon the entire of his employés, many hundreds in number; which, coming to the ears of rival manufacturers, is used by them as necessitating a universal revision of wage-rates.

Now it is questionable whether any pulpit in England would undertake to say such action was wrong. It is upheld by every doctrine of Political Economy; and wealth so obtained may be sanctified by being taxed for missionary purposes or the distribution of tracts. And thus may the misfortune of many and the weakness of a few lead to the impoverishment of more and the greater riches of the rich, while all men think well of it; and the gospels dropped from the pulpit are picked up by the Trades' Unions.

Again, rookeries in a great city are condemned as unfit for human habitation. The Municipality will avail of the Artisans' Dwelling Act to buy and raze them and rebuild. But, knowing this, the owners enhance the price exorbitantly, so as to delay the reform, increase adjacent rents, and weight the rates and rental of the future. In fact, the carefully-devised schemes of the Legislature for the provision of decent dwellings for the poor have been everywhere obstructed and thwarted by the exercise of individual rights; and in many cases the evils sought to be remedied, been considerably increased. But how many Christian teachers would say the owners acted wrongly? It is generally allowed that Christianity is one thing and business is another; and, in point of fact, the principles of each are mutually destructive.

But now at length the eighteen long years of subjection and repression have been traversed; the life of perfect obedience and holiness has been lived; patience has had its perfect work; and the Flower of Humanity, completely formed at Nazareth, is to open, display its beauty, then shed its petals, and deposit an undying seed. He had come and gone in Nazareth; had entered, worshipped, and left the synagogue so often, and yet nobody had taken notice of Him. It would have been the same had He attended—a carpenter's son—the chapels of to-day. He left Nazareth, not only without a testimonial, but also without a disciple. It is impossible but that He had often spoken. His sayings were evidently unpalatable, Himself unpopular, and His rejection complete. But the dawning of His triumph is at hand. Gone are the slow suns and moons of Nazareth; come are those days, all too short, in which teaching and healing and preaching are packed together for the world's thankful reading, as the former life for God's alone. Singly He walks—a man of thirty years—the longest part of life behind Him, the outcome of it all before. He finds men travelling eastward, and expectant Jerusalem

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sending forth its swarms of pilgrims. Lost in that bright and motley crowd, He traverses their road, and halts not till it reaches Bethany, on the other side of Jordan. There is His faithful servant John swaying a multitude by no other power than words of God. A crisis is come in John's career; he feels it; a premonition that the short days are getting shorter, and that he must rouse himself to fulfil to the utmost and at his best the mission with which he has been charged. That strong, wild spirit on whom the warm sun now falls, will have rest enough presently in the cold, dark cell of Herod. Behold him, with unwonted fire in his eye, his raiment of camel's hair undulating with the muscles that urge his words into the air; while soldiers and carriers, merchants and farmers come to him for baptism. Priests and Levites have come to him with the inquiry, "Who art thou?" To them and to the surging crowd he speaks again: "I am not the Christ." "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness; make straight the way of the Lord. I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am unworthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." A stream of disciples follow him again to the Jordan; among them the artisan of Galilee. These two young men meet: God and man; Master and servant; forerunner and Lord; "voice" and "Word." John looks, and feels his day is over; and the sceptre has dropped from his hands. HENRY DEACON.

THE CLERGYMAN'S DAUGHTER.

IN the minister's morning sermon
He told of the primal fall,
And how henceforth the wrath of God
Rested on each and all.

And how, of His will and pleasure,
All souls, save a chosen few,
Were doomed to the quenchless burning
And held in the way thereto.

Yet never by faith's unreason
A saintlier soul was tried,
And never the harsh old lesson
A tenderer heart belied.

And, after the painful service
On that pleasant Sabbath day,
He walked with his little daughter
Thro' the apple bloom of May.

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Sweet in the fresh green meadow,
Sparrow and blackbird sung;
Above him their tinted petals
The blossoming orchards hung.

Around on the wonderful glory
The minister looked and smiled;
"How good is the Lord who gives us
These gifts from His hand, my child!

"Behold in the bloom of apples
And the violets in the sward
A hint of the old, lost beauty
Of the Garden of the Lord."

Then up spake the little maiden,
Treading on snow and pink:
"O father! these pretty blossoms
Are very wicked, I think.

"Had there been no garden of Eden
There never had been a fall.
And if never a tree had blossomed
God would have loved us all."

"Hush, child!" the father answered,
"By His decree man fell;
His ways are in clouds and darkness,
But He doeth all things well.

"And whether by His ordaining
To us cometh good or ill,
Joy or pain, or light or shadow,
We must fear and love Him still."

"Oh I fear Him!" said the daughter,
"And I try to love Him too;
But I wish He was good and gentle,
Kind and loving as you."

The minister groaned in spirit
As the tremulous lips of pain,
And wide, wet eyes uplifted
Questioned his own in vain.

Bowing his head, he pondered
The words of the little one;
Had he erred in his life-long teachings
Had he wrong to his Master done?

To what grim and dreadful idol
Had he lent the holiest name?
Did his own heart, loving and human,
The God of his worship shame?

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And lo! from the bloom and greenness,
From the tender skies above,
And the face of his little daughter,
He read a lesson of love.

No more as the cloudy terror
Of Sinai's mount of law,
But as Christ in the Syrian Lilies
The vision of God he saw.

And as when, in the clefts of Horeb,
Of old was His presence known,
The dread, Ineffable glory,
Was Infinite goodness alone.

Thereafter his hearers noted
In his prayers a tenderer strain,
And never the gospel of hatred
Burned on his lips again.

And the scoffing tongue was prayerful,
And the blinded eyes found sight,
And hearts, as flint aforetime,
Grew soft in his warmth and light. JOHN WHITTIER.

REASONS FOR REGARDING THE PESHITO AS APOSTOLIC.

1st. I FEEL constrained to search for an early New Testament, suited to test the Hebrew people, before the predicted judgments overtook them, as to whether they would receive or reject a risen Christ (Matthew xxiii. 34-39). The promised writers, of whom he spoke, must have appeared before the war that ended in the ruin of Jerusalem.

2nd. The writing so promised must be in a language suited, not merely for the learned few, but to the common people, "Who heard him gladly."

3rd. Greek was not such a language, according to Pilate, who knew the Jews well, and who used three languages to secure the reading of one short sentence, namely, the one placed over the cross, A.D. 33. No change had taken place in the diffusion of Greek among them up to A.D. 58, when Paul was arrested; for when he requested to speak to the Roman officer, with a surging Jewish mob just at hand, Claudius Lysias promptly demanded of the apostle, "Canst thou speak Greek?" with the evident wish not to commit himself with the people whilst he heard Paul.

4th. Scholars admit that Syriac was the vernacular language of the Hebrew people in the time of Christ and the apostles.

5th. Those who favour a Greek original tell us nothing of a canon of a New Testament collected for long after the destruction of Jerusalem.

6th. The tradition of the Syrian Churches that their Peshito New Testament was collected for them by the Apostle Thady, or "Jude, the brother of James," shows that the necessity, indicated in our first proposition, was duly met by the supply of that Testament; it fulfilled

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the words of Christ, "Behold I send you scribes or writers. All these things shall come upon this generation."

7th. The Peshito contained, originally, all the New Testament except 2nd Peter, 2nd John, 3rd John, Jude, and the Revelation. The absence of these five portions is best accounted for on the ground of historic necessity; the Peshito was published before they were written, and therefore, they could have no place in it.

8th. Luke, in the opening of his gospel, is in evident sympathy with many writers who had taken in hand just such a work as the collection of the canon, and enters heartily upon the task of enriching it by two contributions of his own; both of which he dedicates to a noble patron, just such as the Syrian tradition tells us supplied Jude with the "ways and means" of his great undertaking.

9th. The Gospel of John closes with a certificate, indicating that it had been prepared by a company of revisers, who were presided over by a chief, who speaks of the abundant works of Christ in a manner suitable only to his constant attendant, such as Jude was.

10th. Jude's own epistle, which cannot be regarded as a treatise on the "common salvation," nevertheless speaks of him as having been engaged "with all diligence" writing, on that great theme, when information reached him of the dangers of the churches which his epistle was written to counteract. For the above and many other reasons which cannot be crowded into the space to which we are limited, the writer accepts, in good faith, the tradition of the Syrian Churches, as to the origin of the New Testament; but if this tradition be accepted, it settles the question for ever as to apostolicity. JAMES HOLDING.

[Mr. Holding has sent us a forcible argument on this subject, which will appear in January. It is a curious fact that, though this Journal is read by hundreds of Biblical scholars, we have not yet received a single line either accepting or rejecting his very interesting theory. We use the last word purposely, because an *ex-cathedra* utterance, even if we were capable of giving it, would interfere with the freedom of discussion which we desire on all such matters." ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

CAN NAPOLEON I. BE THE LAST ANTICHRIST?

DEAR SIR,—The able article by Mr. McCausland in which this question is raised in the November number of the RAINBOW will doubtless attract attention. I, for one, have read it with considerable interest, but finding myself constrained utterly to dissent from the conclusion at which the writer arrives, I desire, with your permission, briefly to indicate the grounds on which I do so. These grounds are twofold.

In the first place, it appears to me that Mr. McCausland's argument breaks down at what I deem its most vital point. He writes (p. 489): "The particulars of the description (in Rev. xvii. 8-11), as characteristic of the party intended, *cannot*, I conceive, *by any possibility*

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be fairly applied to any other individual that has ever existed, or can ever exist, than to him, to whom I feel assured, they all point, viz., the late Napoleon I., Emperor of the French. How, for example, could vers. 10, 11 be possibly applied to any other man who has ever lived? The angel, addressing John, states that the sixth form of Roman Government was then in actual existence: 'Five are fallen, and (one is) and the other is not yet come' . . . The Emperorship having been the form then in existence, it necessarily constituted the sixth head. The five preceding ones had been as follows: kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes. The Emperorship ceased on the abdication of the then Emperor, A.D. 1806, when Napoleon I. became the acknowledged seventh head . . . But in ver. 11 we have mention, for the first time, of an eighth head? How comes this, seeing the beast has but seven altogether? Just in this way. The reappearance on earth of the seventh head shall be, as it were, an eighth; that is a *quasi* eighth, as we say. And that this is the real solution of the apparent inconsistency in the case, is plainly declared, as follows: 'The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven. How could Napoleon I. be more plainly designated?"

In reply to this I would draw attention to the fact that in the case of each of the preceding heads of the beast, not a single individual but a succession of individuals of the same class had been represented. There had not simply been *a* king, but kings; not *a* consul, but consuls; not *a* dictator, but dictators; not *a* decemvir, but decemvirs; not *a* military tribune, but tribunes; not *an* Emperor but Emperors. Analogy, therefore, would lead us to conclude that this will also be true of the *seventh* head; that it, in like manner, may represent not one individual but several of the same class. Hence, admitting that Napoleon I. became the seventh head in 1806,—which is more than I am at all prepared to do,—still it seems to me that the terms of the prophecy will be fully conformed to if we suppose that *some other member of the Napoleonic dynasty*,—say, for instance, Prince Jerome Napoleon,—will hereafter enact the *role* of Antichrist, as "the eighth" who yet is "of the seven." All that is needful would be,—what we have already actually seen,—the revival of the French Emperorship; not the resurrection of Napoleon I.

If it be objected to this that the *eighth* head, whoever he may be, must be one "risen from the dead," inasmuch as we are told that he "shall ascend out of the abyss;" my answer is that to press the literal sense here will involve Mr. McCausland in serious difficulties. The "abyss," or "bottomless pit," as we read in the Authorised Version, cannot be regarded as synonymous with the grave; for surely the locusts of chap. ix. do not come out of the grave. Whence, then, is Napoleon I. supposed to rise? If from his tomb at Paris, then he does not rise from the abyss. If not from his tomb at Paris, is it the same man who rises? All that the words "shall ascend out of the abyss," seem to me necessarily to import is that the Antichrist will be raised up by infernal power (2. Thess. ii. 9); that he will be a veritable child of the devil.

Apart from all this, however, and on quite independent Scripture ground, I am prepared to maintain that it is simply *impossible* that Napoleon I. can be the last and personal Antichrist. My argument is

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as follows:—It is clear from Dan. vii. that when Antichrist shall arise the whole of the Roman earth will be divided into *ten* kingdoms, corresponding to the ten toes of the feet of the great metallic image of chap. ii. It appears, furthermore, from Dan viii. 8, 9, that *four* out of these ten toes—four out of the five on the eastern foot of the image—will be, in a revived form, *the four kingdoms into which the Medo-Persian Empire of Alexander was divided after his death.* What those kingdoms were we know as a matter of historical fact. They were Egypt, Greece, Thrace with Bithynia, and Syria. Now it is distinctly stated (Dan. viii. 9), that "OUT OF ONE OF THEM came forth the little horn," whose identity with the Antichrist,—the eighth head of the beast,—I presume Mr. McCausland will not dispute. But if so, it is quite certain that Napoleon I. did not come forth out of Egypt, or Greece, or Thrace, or Syria, but out of France, and consequently he cannot be the Antichrist. Q. E. D.

For my own part I am inclined to think—dogmatism on such points would be absurd—that Antichrist will arise in Syria; an opinion which was entertained by the late Dr. Tregelles; that he will be a Jew—perhaps, according to a very ancient tradition, of the tribe of Dan; and that the true key to his identification, in the first instance, will be his making a covenant for seven years with the Jews after the tenfold division of the Roman earth has taken place. The discovery of "the number of his name" will seal this identification. Only when these things have come to pass shall we be warranted to point to any fellow mortal and say, "Thou art the man!"

W. MAUDE.

Liscard, Birkenhead.

THE RAINBOW.

SIR,—Allow me a few lines to congratulate the Editor and readers of the RAINBOW on the completion of its eighteenth year; and I may well do so, considering its noble and successful testimony, amid much hostility and formidable difficulties; as you, sir, very well know.

The RAINBOW first attracted my interest in 1869, when, looking into a copy of it lying on a friend's table, my eye caught Mr. Constable's article in the June number of that year: "Hell: Regarded as a place where it is 'Good,' but not 'Honourable' to be."

Right glad to find such writing in the RAINBOW, I got it at once, and brought it before the notice of others; and since then have done my best, in various ways, to sustain and circulate it. These circumstances will account for my "congratulation" on this occasion.

1869 was the year in which the RAINBOW gave its first certain sound regarding the glorious truth that immortality by man could only be had as the gift of God in Christ Jesus; and that, consequently, the doctrine of eternal sinning and eternal suffering was an error, serious as it is dismal.

The announcement was not gladly received by *all* who read it. One of these lately told me that it made his heart sad; he thought that the Editor had opened his pages to "infidelity!" That good man, however, was patient with his old friend. Soon he found that the testimony was Divine; his former belief human. He was rejoicing with us at the late Conference in Bradford. Many former friends of the RAINBOW were otherwise affected. Bitter words came instead of kindly greetings; hostility instead of help from those on whose support the Magazine seemed greatly to depend.

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Similar experiences have since followed those of 1869. Able pens that were wont to defend and maintain "Life in Christ," or "Conditional Immortality," have ceased to make their mark in the RAINBOW. Yet it lives; and I question if, in any former year, the literary quality of its matter for 1881 was surpassed, or its circulation more widely extended.

I rejoice to see the honoured names of Constable and Rotherham, &c., still appearing, along with fresh accessions. Yes; let us "thank God and take courage." Let all who love those blessed and glorious truths with which the RAINBOW is made luminous, give all the support they can to its decided and unsectarian testimony, and encourage the heart of its worthy and devoted Editor.

W. LAING.

51, Buccleuch Street,
Edinburgh.

THE MOVEMENT IN CANADA.

DEAR SIR,—I have received the paper giving the details of the proceedings at the late Conference in Bradford. I rejoice to learn that it has been the best yet held, and that the circulation of the literature in connection with the Association is increasing. I sent you lately a copy of the *Globe*, containing a letter from a Congregational Minister in Cobourg, Ontario, relating to the case of Dr. Thomas, a leading Methodist Minister in Chicago, Illinois, U.S., who has lately been on trial for heresy; and I send you today another number of the *Globe*, wherein you will find another letter, sympathising with Mr. Thomas, from the Rev. Dr. Burns, *Principal of the Wesleyan Female Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario.*

You will find in all these unquestionable evidence that the stagnant pool of the popular orthodoxy is being troubled by the angels of truth, and that both ministers and people, of almost all denominations, are awakening to the fact that the traditionary creeds cannot stand the test of the Word of God; and form one of the strongest barriers to the progress of free Biblical interpretation, and the power of the truth which sanctifies and saves the soul.

To you and Mr. White, the earliest in this field of Christian labour to unfold the glorious truths of "*life only in Christ*," and that "*Sin and suffering*" *are finally to pass away for ever under the reign of Jesus*, the evidence of the progress of the truth must be a source of sacred joy amidst the trials to which you have been exposed. The promise of Jesus to His faithful and suffering followers, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake," is well calculated to comfort and cheer you.

I read your admirable discourse at the opening of the Conference, and trust that the truths therein proclaimed, and the facts therein unfolded, will tell mightily on the minds and hearts of honest inquirers after the truth of God. The cool hypocrisy of the hireling shepherd to whom you alluded, who "*could not afford!*" to deliver the message of the Most High God, which he professed to believe, for fear of losing the favour of men; and the silence of the Bishop of Manchester to the question of Albert Smith, evidently under the monitions of conscience resisted, are very lamentable evidences of the character of our popular orthodoxy.

I enclose in the newspaper a

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tract issued lately by the Pastor of Knox's Church in Toronto, an able preacher, and teacher of the truth concerning the pre-millennial coming of the Lord. It is entitled, "Body, Soul, and Spirit." The good man may be "taught the way of the Lord more perfectly;" and were you to give a review of it in the RAINBOW, I think it would be productive of great good. He succeeded the late Dr. Topp, who was a faithful, good man; but, as he never had his eyes opened to see the truth concerning the coming of the Lord, his people were left in ignorance of the glorious theme. Mr. Parsons has awakened the congregation to its truth and importance, and I hope that he may, ere long, receive and teach "life only in Christ." Your review of the tract may effect a salutary change in his own mind, and in the minds of his people. Mr. Hastings, of Boston, Mass., U.S., the editor of the "Christian," remarked lately in a letter to me, that "few men after the fiftieth year of their age change their religious opinions," which I suppose is the case; but there are exceptions.

The small church under the pastorate of Mr. Brookman is holding its ground, sustained by the hope of the blessing of God. I hope that you and yours are well, and that your church is growing in numbers, and in the grace of God.

I am, yours faithfully,

JAMES LESSLIE.

Ontario.

NOTICES.

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE EDITOR, by Messrs. RUSSELL AND SONS, Photographers to the Royal Family, 29, Union Road, Tufnell Park, London, N.W., and East Street, Chichester. Our readers may be sure that we never should have *thought* of such a thing, but at the time that many of them asked for a likeness of their humble servant, the eminent artists just named asked him to sit for his portrait. Had he consulted his feelings he would have declined; but the wishes of his friends are appreciated, as the January number will show.

NEXT YEAR! Our esteemed readers, believers in the great truths we are privileged to advocate, will allow us to make a seasonable suggestion. There is nothing original about it. It will not startle by its novelty. It is simply this: Will *each* subscriber kindly enlist *another* for next year? We feel confident that our present subscribers will continue; at least if we may interpret the feelings of all by the expressions of many; but it is on every account desirable that the number should be doubled. If this is done, we shall be cheered in our arduous but beloved work, and recovered apostolic doctrine will gain new adherents. In the hope of an enlarged demand, through the kind zeal of its friends, an enlarged issue of the RAINBOW will be printed, so as to prevent disappointment to any who may order it of their local booksellers, or direct from the publisher.

The Editor asks as a SPECIAL FAVOUR that subscribers will let the publisher know as soon in December as convenient how many copies they will want for next year. He is sorry to give his friends this trouble; but to him it is *exceedingly important*, for personal reasons, apart altogether from the sacred duty of diffusing the truth as far as possible.

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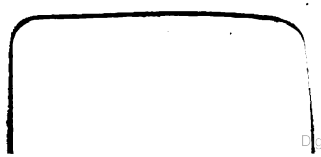
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